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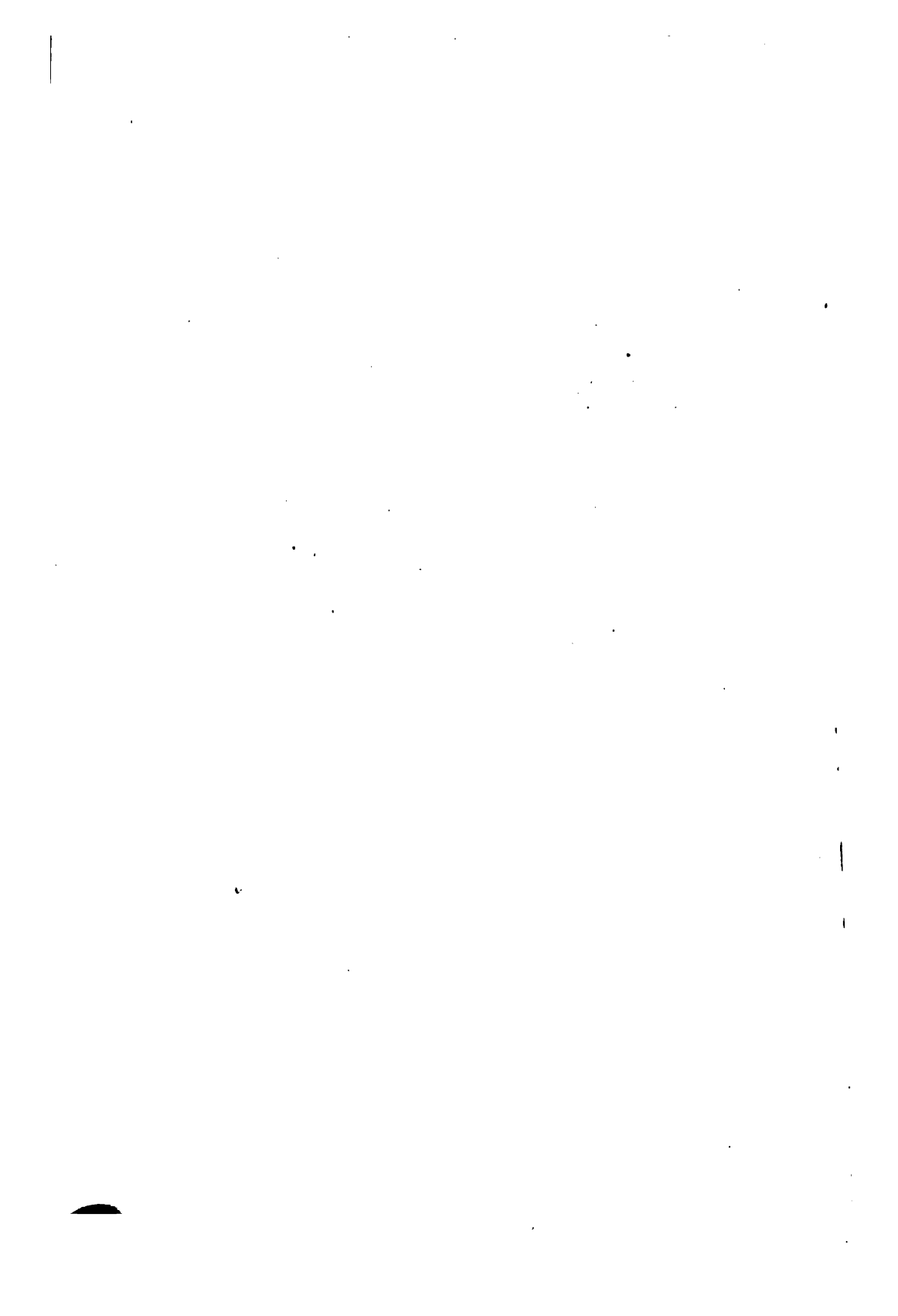
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FORES'S
SPORTING NOTES
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SKETCHES.

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FORES'S SPORTING NOTES & Sketches

A Quarterly Magazine

DESCRIPTIVE OF

BRITISH, INDIAN, COLONIAL, AND
FOREIGN SPORT.

WITH

Thirty-two Full-page Illustrations.

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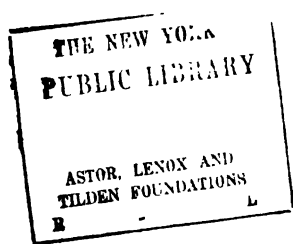
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MEET OF THE ROYAL HOUNDS ON ASCOT HEATH.

FORES'S SPORTING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

HUNTING THE CARTED DEER.

By FINCH MASON.



SOME thirty odd years ago a paragraph made its appearance one fine morning in the daily papers to the effect that it was proposed to pull down Temple Bar. That paragraph created something like a panic in the City. 'What!' exclaimed the British merchant of the period, 'destroy the only barrier that separates us sober-minded toilers of the East from the frivolous butterflies of the West? What next?'

The observant Mr. Punch, of course, had something to say on the subject, and speedily appeared a sketch from the inimitable pencil of John Leech, depicting Alderman Gobble starting up from his chair, newspaper in hand, with horror and dismay depicted on his countenance. 'What!' he is made to exclaim, 'pull down Temple Bar? Why, they'll be doing away with Gog and Magog next! *Ring for the sherry!*'

Pretty much the same feelings that penetrated the waistcoat of Mr. Alderman Gobble must have been experienced by those two staunch staghunters, Mr. Bowen May and Mr. Edmund Tattersall—both of whom have followed Her Majesty's Stag-hounds for more years than they probably care to remember—when they awoke one morning to find that a petition was on foot, and shortly to be presented to Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen, beseeching her, in the name of a considerable number of her loyal subjects, suffering from—we will hope—temporary softening of the brain, to abolish her pack of hounds—a pack that had been originally started by that dear old sportive dragon, Queen Bess, of immortal memory—on the ground that entailing, as it did, great suffering on the hunted

deer, it should be classed in the same category as other prohibited sports, such as bullbaiting and dogfighting, and treated accordingly.

The petition, got up originally, I believe, by an excited parson, with presumably such a small parish to look after that he had plenty of time, and to spare, to meddle with what he did *not* understand (had I been his bishop I should have rated him gently with a 'Kennel, sir, kennel!'), grew to large dimensions, and was signed by people of much importance in the world, people, too, possessing such knowledge of their subject that staghunters in general, and Lord Ribblesdale in particular, might well tremble in their topboots at the notion that the energetic Mr. Colam, the secretary to that most praiseworthy society, 'The Royal Prevention of Cruelty to Animals,' might be down upon 'em at any moment.

Of the importance of these signatures my readers will judge for themselves when I tell them that two thousand of them were those of young girls, varying in age from ten and upwards, in the employ of Messrs. Huntley & Palmer, the eminent biscuit makers of Reading. Yea, verily, 'A Maiden's Tribute' with a vengeance.

'Not know what they were signing!' argued a frivolous friend of mine, who, unlike myself, never can be serious for five minutes together. 'Don't you believe it! I tell you they were jealous—jealous as blazes, those "small gals" were, when they signed that blessed petition.'

'Jealous!' I exclaimed in astonishment, 'What do you mean? Have *you* got softening of the brain, too?' and I looked at him sadly as I spoke.

'What do I mean?' the frivolous one replied, cheerily. 'Why the little dears objected—and very properly, too, I think—to *the stag being done as crisp as one of their own biscuits!*'

Joking apart, the petition to Her Majesty, though of such large dimensions, was so evidently the work of people who knew nothing whatever about the matter they professed to be interested in, that it is almost a wonder that it was thought necessary to take any notice of it, and it was probably only in self defence that the cudgels were taken up by the other side. Suffice it to say that on a rival petition being started, praying Her Majesty to keep on the Buckhounds as hitherto, it was signed not only by all the principal landowners, farmers, and tradesmen of the district, but by many of the highest in the land—men whose

names surely would alone be sufficient guarantee for the absence of cruelty in the sport, the continuation of which they were advocating.

'Most wotes carries the day,' observed Mrs. Bardell's friend, Mrs. Cluppins, on a certain memorable occasion, familiar to all students of the *Pickwick Papers*, and so it is, thank goodness, in this instance; the latest information being to the effect that the followers of the Royal Hunt have no longer any reason for fearing that their favourite sport will be knocked on the head now, or at any future time.

'Hooray! and good luck to the scarlet and gold!' say I.

The writer of this article has all along held the idea that the hunted deer, not only as a rule does not *object* to his 'day out,' but in many instances actually *likes* it. Feeling, however, that this was somewhat a bold assertion to make on his own account, he thought it advisable before doing so to ask the opinion of some of the most prominent staghunters in the kingdom, and he is delighted to find, from what they tell him, that his notion is by no means the preposterous one many people would probably say it is. Indeed, the instances in point they have been good enough to furnish him with, speak for themselves.

With regard to the theory set up by the silly agitators who endeavoured, unsuccessfully, out of pure mischief I verily believe, to do away with a time honoured institution, *viz.*: that the sport of staghunting was a cruel one, my correspondents, needless to say, are entirely in unison. One and all not only deny the accusation *in toto*, but agree in saying that, so far from being cruel, it is the most humane sport in existence.

Colonel Somerset, the Master of the Enfield Chase Stag-hounds, writes us: 'During the years I have kept staghounds I have *never* had a stag killed by the hounds. Every year I have some killed, but it is by accident in some way, the same as men meet with an accident in the hunting-field. I have now,' adds the Colonel, 'some of my best deer which I have hunted eight seasons, and which are as fresh as they were when I got them first.'

Another well-known Master of Hounds writes: 'I consider the sport, hunting the carted deer, the most humane of any enjoyed by Englishmen, and the least conducive to cruelty, as it is the *sinè qua non* of a stag-hunter that he rides to *save life*.'

With reference to my query as to what was his opinion of my theory of the hunted stag actually *liking* the run, my correspondent

replies thus: 'Should I quote all the instances that have come under my notice during the last twenty years in which the deer does not only not object, but even enjoys being hunted, the instances are so many that should I once begin I could write for a week and then be no nearer the end of them, and I seldom pass a week in the season without noticing it. But one will suffice as a sample. A deer of ours, named "Iroquois" for the last four or five seasons that he was hunted, would never run for more than forty minutes, not from want of condition or anything of that kind, but merely because he was lazy and did not care a rap for the hounds, which was more than once proved by turning him out again after we had run him forty minutes, when he would trot in and out among the hounds, calmly knocking them over as he went, and then quietly trot back to the place where he had been taken. Then woe to the man who again tried to meddle with him.'

I think that any one reading the anecdote just quoted—only one of many, as its relater expressly states—cannot but agree in thinking with me that it is almost sufficient answer of itself to the charge of cruelty to the hunted deer, the detractors of the sport bring against its followers.

So much to the point, and so fair, are the concluding remarks of my correspondent, that I cannot help quoting them. He says: 'I do not deny that accidents will happen sometimes in which the animal suffers, but these are more often than not caused by barbed wire or spiked iron palings, which not only lacerate the deer, but prevent people riding to hounds. But nevertheless, I maintain that stag hunting, when properly conducted by responsible men, is not as a general rule cruel, or in the least degree cruel.

Mr. W. H. Grenfell, of Taplow Court, Master of what used to be H. R. H. Prince of Wales's Harriers, who often turns out a deer for a run with his hounds, also testifies to the fact that when once the animal gets into the way of the thing he doesn't object to it. A proof of this is that one of his stags on the *second* occasion he was wanted *voluntarily* walked into his van. That deer you may depend upon it was a wag at heart, and had made up his mind to give Mr. Grenfell and the guardsmen 'beans' that afternoon.

Mr. Grenfell goes on to say: 'I am certain that animals soon find out if you mean *business* or not, and I don't believe that a deer which has been hunted two or three times is very much

terrified. If they were they would fight each time more and more when they were being put into the cart in the morning, whereas the contrary is the case, and after two or three experiences they'll almost go in of their own accord. I have hunted deer for six years with my hounds, and do not know of an instance of one being hurt by them; though of course they come to grief in other ways occasionally.'

Mr. Grenfell concludes with the following very pertinent remarks: 'In my humble opinion it is quite unnecessary to have staghounds so very big, and, also, it is quite unnecessary to blood them. The scent of a deer is so attractive to a hound that he will run it in preference to another, and hounds soon understand that they are meant to *catch* the deer, and not to eat it. I think they are very often cross, quarrelsome, and disappointed if they *lose* a deer, but they are quite happy if they catch it, and wouldn't be any happier for killing it when they have once grasped the fact that they are not wanted to kill it, which they do very soon'

Mr. Bowen May, the 'Father of the Hunt,' as he is termed, and with some reason, seeing that he dates his experience with the Royal Buckhounds from the mastership of Lord Maryborough, full forty years ago—naturally has a good deal to say on the subject of cruelty. A light-weight; a hard rider, as every one knows; and invariably mounted on a thoroughbred one, he has always been close to the hounds, and he does not remember a single instance during the long period he has hunted with the Queen's of a deer being damaged by the hounds. As he justly observes, too, every possible precaution is taken to avoid such an accident, a whip always being sent on in advance.

Then there is another young sportsman, Mr. Edmund Tattersall to wit, who claims to have a longer acquaintance with the Royal Pack than even his friend, Mr. Bowen May, for has he not a vivid recollection of taking a prominent part, when a boy from school, in a celebrated run the Ripley deer gave them; how long ago do you think?—well, only sixty years, that's all. Mr. Tattersall, who should, I think the reader will agree, know something of staghunting by this time, gives it as his firm opinion that it is the least cruel of any sport. 'And I really think,' says he, 'that some deer that have been hunted *like* the "day out," as the old "Woodman" did, I believe, in the latter part of his six years' hunting career. For he never seemed alarmed, and when he was tired ran in somewhere

for shelter. The Woodman's end was a sad one. He was smothered by some stupid yokels in a barn full of hay, whither he had taken refuge after a run in the Harrow country.'

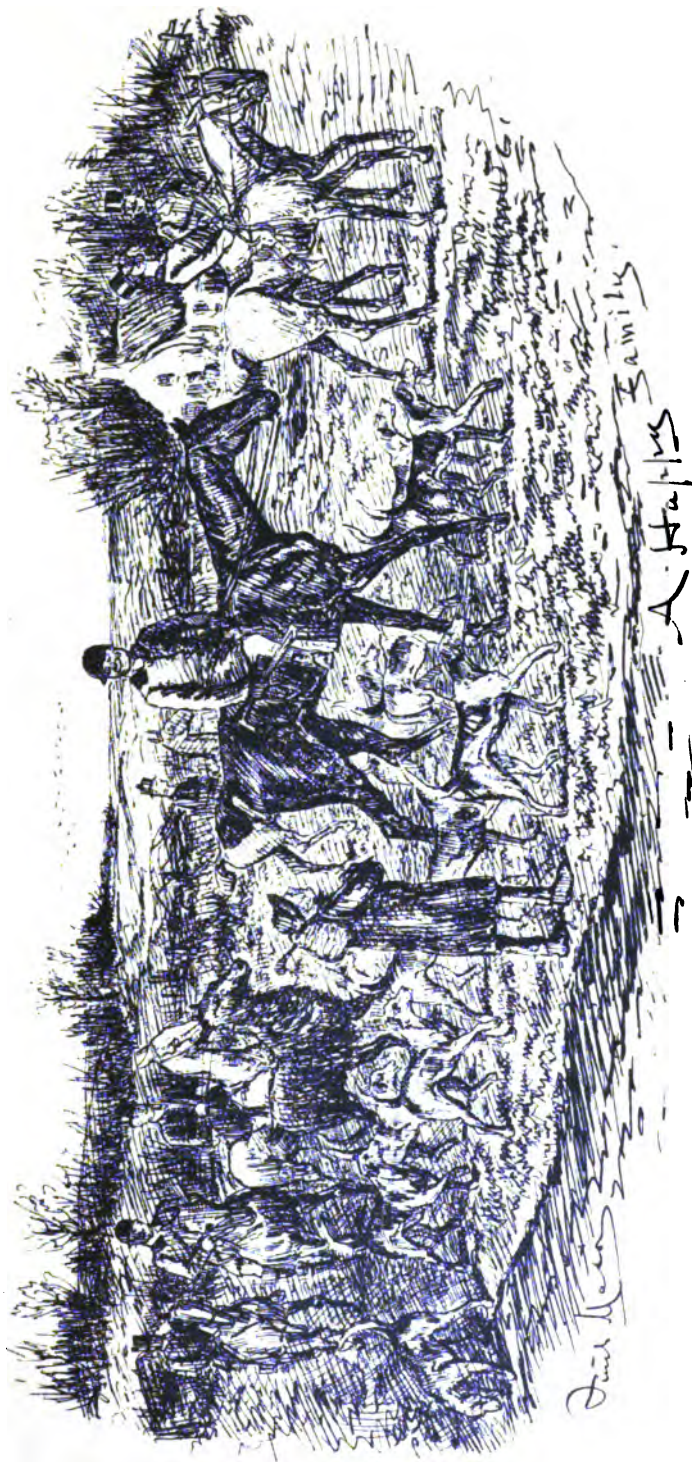
Mr. Tattersall at the same time relates an anecdote that is indeed a hard nut for the would-be abolitionists of the Royal Pack to crack. 'I have heard,' says he, 'that a gentleman, who some years ago kept a small pack of staghounds in Hampshire, used to return home *with the deer and hounds all trotting along together*, and I know people who have seen them.'

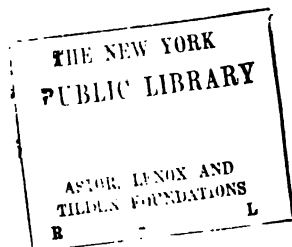
Another story a friend sends me, the absolute truth of which he vouches for, goes a long way to prove that the hunted deer is not the frightened animal when being hunted by a pack of hounds that certain would-be philanthropists would have the world believe. The stag one day, with the Royal Pack after him, was met in the road by a small boy returning from school. Tommy Brown, with the disregard for the welfare of his clothes habitual to youth, and which usually lasts until he has to pay for them himself—when he, of course, becomes more careful—promptly took off his cap and shied it at the noble animal. And what did the poor hunted brute do, think you? Just picked Tommy Brown's cap up in his mouth, bucked over the fence out of the road, and galloped off with his trophy rejoicing, leaving poor Tommy—who was probably well aware of what he might expect at the hands of mother or father, or both, when he arrived home minus his headgear—blubbering his heart out.

Frank Goodall, who succeeded Harry King as Royal Huntsman, though of opinion that it would be difficult to determine whether the deer really like being hunted, goes on to say, 'But I *do* know that many of them become quite accustomed to it, and will run until they think they have gone far enough, then seek the nearest shelter, knowing perfectly well that they will be protected from injury. Mr. Goodall adds: 'We had one stag who would voluntarily jump into the deer van, and who was named "Volunteer" on that account.'

Seeing that a stag can be just as obstinate as any other animal, I should say that this anecdote certainly goes to prove that if 'Volunteer' did not actually love the sport of being hunted he did not mind it much, if at all.

And now I must quote from a letter received from Fred Cox, the popular huntsman to Lord Rothschild's well-known pack of staghounds. Fred is nothing unless *thorough*, and he





goes as straight at his subject with his pen as he does at the doubles in the Vale. Says he: 'I think it the most childish and stupid thing I ever heard of. I've had nearly forty years' experience with deer, both in the field and paddocks, and cannot possibly see where the cruelty comes in. A few years ago we had a most extraordinary deer named "Sunlight." We hunted him for seven seasons, and scarcely ever took him under a fourteen or fifteen miles' point, but often over, and when he had tired himself out a child could go and take him and lead him anywhere. I don't believe he ever got a scratch on him, and he lived a pensioner in the paddock to a good old age. I've had the honour of serving the Rothschild family for almost forty years, and I don't think there can be more kind-hearted people in the world; and I'm sure if they had thought there was any cruelty they would not have gone on a second season.' Our huntsman winds up (he has got his double thong out now): 'If I was in Her Majesty's place, and they brought such a lame tale to me, I should order them apartments at Hanwell. If they would interest themselves in putting down that cursed wire and spiked palings, which are a disgrace to Englishmen, you would never hear anything about cruelty to deer.'

To which noble sentiments I feel sure the readers of *Fores's Notes and Sketches* will reply in unison, 'And so say all of us!'

I have said my say on the subject of cruelty in connexion with hunting the carted deer, and I am vain enough to hope and think that the opinions I have quoted—opinions of men who not only know what they are talking about, but who would be the very last to participate in sport in which direct cruelty to any animal was involved—are quite sufficient in themselves to refute the charges brought against the sport by a lot of ignorant people who *don't* know what they are talking about.

Now for a word on the sport itself *as* a sport.

The great charm about staghunting is that—granted, of course, a good deer—you are always sure of a gallop. And with a good horse under you, and nerve to ride him, what is more enjoyable, I would ask, than a run over the Harrow country with the Queen's, or over the famous Vale of Aylesbury with the Baron? What more exciting moment than when, the requisite law having been given, the hounds are laid on, and you give your eager horse the 'office' to go.

I fancy I can see in my mind's eye at this moment that most enthusiastic of staghunters and much-lamented sports-

man, the Hon. Robert Grimston, his face beaming with delight as, giving his thigh a hearty smack with his ungloved hand, he exclaims, 'Now, gentlemen, we're going over the very finest part of the Vale!'

Your foxhunter is very apt to turn up his nose when staghunting is mentioned, and speak disparagingly of the sport—calf-hunting he is fond of calling it—and will suggest, with his best sneer, that if you only go out for a gallop a red-herring would answer the purpose equally well.

How many of your ardent foxhunters, I would humbly ask, when out with the pack they affect, trouble themselves about seeing the hounds work, or, indeed, take the slightest interest in their proceedings. When the hounds are drawing a covert our friends, as a rule, are chattering like magpies on all sorts of subjects in the ride. A holloa is suddenly heard, a rush is made, and off they go, helter skelter. After which it is a case, as the late Mr. Bromley Davenport would say, of—

'Hang the huntsman,
D——n the hounds.'

Granted there *are* sportsmen who love hunting for hunting's sake, and never let the hounds out of their sight all day, but they are few and far between, not more than one out of twenty, I should say, if as many.

I have known instances of certain Buckinghamshire fox-hunters calmly leaving their own pack in the lurch whilst drawing a covert and joining in with the staghounds whom they descried running hard in the immediate neighbourhood, to the intense indignation, when he heard of it, of the M.F.H.

A large majority of the hunting men who abuse staghunting as a *sport*, I take it, are those who, if they *did* go out with the 'staggers,' wouldn't see the way they went.

Horses who are used to the stag are clean out of their element with the fox, and if they don't get away quickly lose their temper and fidget dreadfully. They have been known occasionally to lie down and roll in sheer disgust.

Needless to say, for a man who hunts to *ride*, there is no finer opportunity for him to shew off his capabilities than with the stag, and that he is fully aware of the fact is shown by the number of 'bruisers' who patronise the sport year after year.

The saloon carriage slipped from the morning express at Leighton Buzzard on the Baron's hunting mornings was, and

doubtless is, filled with sportsmen who would more than hold their own in any country.

It has always been a question as to the pace hounds go. The following letter, therefore, on the subject, written by the late Charles Davis to Mr. Bowen May, who has kindly lent it to me, cannot fail to be interesting, emanating as it does from such an authority as the celebrated Royal Huntsman :—

‘ASCOT HEATH, 4th January, 1864.

‘MY DEAR SIR,—

‘Who shall decide when Doctors disagree? My opinion is that hounds seldom exceed ten miles an hour, indeed, nine miles is much oftener run. Our pack, last Friday, went much faster for a quarter of an hour, but in a roady county like ours checks often occur. I remember, in 1831, in the Vale of Aylesbury, going from the Hardwick Brook to Twyford Mill, near Bicester, in 1 hour, 10 minutes, distance, I was told, is 20 miles. I also went from Salt Hill to Rickmansworth, and took the deer in the Huntsman’s house (Oldaker). Mr. Harvey Coombe was there. In the Bicester run it was all grass and no roads.

‘Very truly yours, C. DAVIS.

‘J. BOWEN MAY, Esq.’

I wonder if this was the run mentioned by ‘the Druid’ in ‘Silk and Scarlet,’ in which he relates how that Mr. Harvey Coombe, being at the kennels, and hearing the hounds, went out and discovered Mr. Davis lying in a ditch with his arm round the stag’s neck. Out came the M.F.H.’s watch, and it was in his hand for nearly a quarter of an hour before a soul came up.

Probably never was a more widely known or popular huntsman than the late Charles Davis, and it is not surprising that in 1859 his many admirers should think it high time to present the veteran sportsman, who had spent over half a century in upholding sport with the Royal Buckhounds, with some sort of testimonial as a mark of their respect and esteem. The idea, started in the first instance by Mr. Bowen May and Mr. Edmund Tattersall, soon ‘caught on’ as the Yankees say, as may be imagined: the result being a testimonial in the shape of a magnificent silver Tazza, costing three hundred guineas (the subscriptions were limited to a guinea), and this was presented to the veteran huntsman at a banquet held at the ‘London Tavern,’ to which over two hundred guests, mostly in scarlet, and booted and spurred, sat down, Mr. Vansittart, M.P. for Windsor, being in the chair.

Mr. Edmund Tattersall, in a speech during the evening, remarked, referring to the testimonial:—'Beautiful as it was, it fell far short of what it would have been had the first two generations of Mr. Davis's experience co-operated with the present, and the attendance that night was wofully thin when contrasted with the immense assemblage there would have been had every man who possessed the pleasure of knowing Mr. Davis been present.'

Altogether, it was a memorable occasion, this banquet to the great huntsman, and, indeed, an event to be marked with red letters in the Annals of the Royal Hunt. We should like to send copies of *Bell's Life* recording it to some of the (missing word here, please) who are so desirous to do away with stag-hunting in general, and the Queen's Buckhounds in particular. It might do them good.

'THE HILLERTON POACHER.'

By 'BIJOU.'

AMONGST the inhabitants of most of our country towns and villages, there is generally to be found some 'ne'er-do weel' or other, who is ever ready and willing enough to work, so long as that labour is connected with sport. And the village of Hillerton, close to which place I spent the earlier part of my life, 'proved no exception to the rule.' The name of our scamp was Sam Cooksey, who called himself a hawker, but his real trade was that of loafing, the monotony of which he sometimes broke by a little dog stealing, and a good deal of poaching, for the country around swarmed with game.

But although our village was the home of one of the greatest blackguards in the county, it could also boast of affording shelter to a model man, by name Jim Vaughan, and it is with him that my story mostly deals.

He was a hedger and ditcher, but could turn his hand to any kind of work, and was looked upon by the farmers as the pattern labourer of Hillerton. His father had been a noted poacher, but the disgrace was not allowed to descend to his son, who lived in the enjoyment of a brilliant reputation that was never sullied for a day. He was never to be seen 'soaking' in the village 'pub,' or to be missed on Sunday from the parish church.

The parson rejoiced over him, and often alluded to his character as one worthy of being imitated, not only by those of his own class, but even in higher circles of society. Of course, Sam Cooksey hated him, and was ever ready with hints of all kinds, trying to damage his good name and reputation. But in this for a long time he signally failed. Jim, who for purposes of his own took care to keep the outside of his platter clean, was married to a woman who was a miracle of tidiness and good behaviour, and their cottage, which was situated on the outskirts of the village, was always intensely clean and pleasantly surrounded by a model garden.

The inside walls of this worthy couple's abode were adorned with a most heterogeneous collection, consisting of old swords, daggers, and other ancient relics which Jim had found in clearing out the foss of an old ruined castle. Beside these hung antlered heads of fallow deer, the claws of hawks, wings of jays, herons' legs, foxes' heads, pads and brushes, and skins of various large-sized snakes. For Jim was a clever stuffer, and many a rare specimen had been given him by the squire's keepers to set up. In fact, his cottage was a regular museum, and when any visitors were staying at the Grange—the great house of the neighbourhood—those who had a taste in this direction, always strolled down on an 'off day' to inspect his collection. He was considered an oracle on many subjects, but especially on the habits and whereabouts of all kinds of game.

There was not a brood of partridges or pheasants within three miles of Hillerton with which he was not acquainted. He marked the runs of hares, and observed their feeding grounds. He listened to what others said on such points, but took care not to tempt with dangerous knowledge any of the villagers.

With the keepers he was on the best of terms; they found in him a useful friend in giving information as to the character and doings of a certain well-known clique of poachers who were also inhabitants of our village. Our head-keeper, Jackson, made him almost his bosom friend, and had about as much idea of seeing him out poaching on the Hillerton preserves, as seeing the Bishop of Woodchester hooking down the pheasants from their perches with his crozier.

As a fact Jim never did go out with poachers, yet none knew so well as he how the trees rustled in Hillerton woods at midnight.

A few days before Christmas in each year, the Squire—one

of the olden sort—who was the owner of the above-mentioned covers, and a real good sportsman to boot, used to send out invitations to the neighbouring gentry for a large shoot. This meant employment for a number of beaters, one of whom was sure to be Sam Cooksey, who generally during some period of the day, tried to 'stick' me with a 'well broke spanle dawg,' or a 'fust rate pineter,' both of which I knew, from past experience, were worthless. On one of these Christmas gatherings in particular, he came up to me at the end of the day's proceedings and said, 'Master, I've foun' un out at last.'

'Who do you mean?' I inquired.

'Why, Jimmy Vaughans, to be sure,' he answered, 'your pattern man.'

'Well, what cock-and-bull story have you got against poor Jim this time?' I rejoined.

'None,' he continued, 'I'm telling yer no lies this journey, master, that yer may take oath on; an' if you'll tell Jackson, for he won't believe me, to bring a couple o' nightwatchers, an' be under the big oaks at yonder end o' Hilly wood, at about half-past eleven to-night, you'll find that Mister Jimmy Vaughan's as fond o' a bit o' night poaching as any o' the lads in Hillerton.'

I did not believe a single word of the story as far as it concerned Jim, nor did the keepers to whom I told it. But Sam was so positive in his assertions that we should find some one snaring the Squire's birds, whom he swore would be Vaughan (although he would not give his reasons), that Jackson said perhaps there might be something in it, and agreed to go, at the same time consenting to my forming one of his party, and as we had finished our day's sport rather earlier than usual, I thought I would walk round by Jim's cottage on my way home to call for a red throated diver he was stuffing for me. I also wanted to see if I could detect any preparation in his abode for the mid-night campaign, which Sam had put down to his undertaking. The weather, which in the morning had been clear and frosty, had now changed, and a heavy bank of clouds which rose in the west as the sun set, bespoke rather wind and rain than a continuation of the frost.

Some wood-pigeons had just finished their evening meal off an adjoining field of turnips, and were dropping down to roost on some tall oaks in a spinny to my right, and the atmosphere was so still and heavy, that I could distinctly here the 'flap,' 'flap' of their wings as they settled.

The sheep were folded for the night, and a dead silence so peculiar to a winter's evening reigned over all ; it was, in fact, a bad night for poachers.

Just as I got into the lane leading to Jim's cottage, I heard someone walking with stealthy tread through the dead fern on the opposite side the hedge, and a little farther on, who should jump over the wattled stile leading into the path, but the very man I was going to see.

'Holloa Jim !' I said, 'I was on my way to your house to call for that diver you have had to set up for me.'

And for the first time in my life I thought he looked just a little scared at my sudden appearance. But he recovered himself in a second, saying that he had been over to see a sick niece who lived close by Hilly wood, and as he was going there again that evening, he would leave the bird on passing my home, and so save me the trouble of going down to his cottage. This looked as if he would be in the neighbourhood of the big oaks that night, and that there might be some truth in Sam's story after all.

But in looking into his honest English face, I could not believe anything bad about him. So after going a little further down the lane, I bid him good-night, and we parted, I fully believing him to be as he was always represented—the pattern man of the village.

The Hillerton covers came up within half a mile of the town on the one side, while a stiff enclosed agricultural country stretched for miles and miles around it on the other. The woodlands were full of pheasants, hares, and rabbits, and the open fields swarmed with partridges.

The inhabitants of our village numbered 300, many of whom gained their livelihood during winter months by poaching, and Jackson used to reckon we could turn out a score or more of the most determined poachers in any county in England. Men who could snare a hare in an open furrow as well as in a sineuse, who could silently sweep off coveys of partidges in a night ; who could clear the home woods without firing a shot ; and even rob the farmers' hen-roosts with the greatest impunity.

But somehow or other at the time I speak of, those who had no game to preserve, seemed to think that poaching was a very grave offence. And in those days the county police were not empowered to search any suspected vehicles or persons, so that, unless the poachers were caught 'red handed,' they had the game entirely in their own hands.

But to continue. It was almost dark by the time I reached the road leading to my home, and there was something cheery in the ruddy blaze of light which shot across my path from the blacksmith's forge, and the clang of his hammer as I approached it.

This was a regular haunt of all the gossips and scamps in the place, who, on a cold winter's night, congregated round the forge fire to smoke their pipes, and hatch their nefarious plans.

As I passed, Sam Cooksey stepped out from among a small crowd of idlers, and whispered in my ear, that if the keepers followed his advice, they would be sure of a 'catch,' so help him ! Why he should have had such a bitter hatred against poor Jim, I never could quite understand. But there was some talk of his having wished to make Mrs. Vaughan his wife previous to Jim's marriage, which, if true, would partly account for it.

At a quarter to eleven that night I was at the keeper's lodge, where I found Jackson and three under keepers awaiting my arrival, and all armed with short, thick, dog-spears, for he would not allow his men to carry guns.

The wind had risen since the afternoon, and was now blowing freshly from the north west, and it was just the kind of weather that our poachers delighted in ; not after the sort described in the old popular song of 'It's my delight on a shiny night, in the season of the year,' for I never could believe that the writer knew much about real poaching, as our lads seldom went out when the moon was at her full.

Dark, gusty, blowing weather, with the moon certainly not more than ten or twelve days old, was the night they generally chose ; or a three-quarters one was nearly as good. On this occasion, if the frost had lasted, we should most probably have had too much of her silvery beams to suit either the poachers or ourselves. But as it was, great heavy clouds drifted across the stormy sky, making objects indistinct, and the rattle of the rising wind through the leafless trees drowned the fall of our footsteps.

Jackson led the way, and we followed silently behind, hoping that we were not bound on a fruitless expedition.

On reaching the shelter and shade of the wood, our forces were divided, each one taking a separate line, but all converging to one centre, the big oaks, which was one of the most favourite roosting spots for pheasants on the whole estate, as beneath them grew a great number of trees of lesser growth, upon whose straight branches the birds loved to perch. The night breeze

swept in hollow gusts through the dead trees, and the dismal hoot of the owl echoed mournfully through the forest glades; and every now and then as I splashed on through the mighty cover with staring eyes and nerves strung to their highest tension, it did not require a very great stretch of imagination to convert each stunted bush or withered trunk of tree into the shape of some hideous hobgoblin or gigantic human form.

After about a quarter of an hour's creeping and crawling, I halted for a few seconds to regain my breath, and to listen for sounds of either friends or foes. But all was still save the deep soughing of the wind through a large clump of scotch firs, the beating of my heart like a demon against my ribs, and the three snapping barks of a distant fox. Better get out of this as soon as possible, I thought, so once more I plunged into the thicket; but the intensely deep shadow thrown by the firs on my immediate surroundings, made it almost impossible to see the way. On I had to go, though, or stay there until daylight, and the gloom seemed to increase the deeper I plunged into the wood. At last a sort of uncanny feeling seemed to creep over me, and each time I rustled against a darker bush than usual, my skin turned into 'goose flesh,' as the saying is, and I expected every moment to feel the grasp of an unseen hand on my neck. Nor was I disappointed, for on emerging into an open space made by charcoal burners, and not far from the *rendezvous*, somebody caught me tightly by the arm, and pulled me up with a jerk, which sent the blood coursing through my veins like lightning to my heart.

'Oh, it's you, sir, is it?' said Jackson's welcome voice in my ear. 'I thought I had nabbed one of the lads at last, bad luck to them.'

As he spoke the other three keepers hove in sight on our left, coming down a broad ride which led into the charcoal plain. So we again joined forces, none of us having heard or seen anything unusual in our tramp through that part of the wood.

'I'm afraid it's a wild goose chase we are on to-night, sir,' whispered the head keeper, 'for if there had been any knowing hands abroad, they would have made for this part of the cover, as no birds would roost by the big oaks in the teeth of such a cold wind as this. Holloa! who's that?' pointing as he spoke to a tall figure crossing the ride about 200 yards distant, followed by a large dog, who were revealed to us by the sudden drifting of the heavy clouds from off the face of the moon.

'By Jove, Sam was right after all,' cried Jackson; 'after him, m'lads, as fast as you can, or he may do us.'

There was no need now for stealthy creeping, for the figure, whoever he was, had recognised us at the same moment we did him, and was making off as fast as his long legs could carry him. But what seemed rather strange to us all was, that he turned from the shelter of the thick wood (where he might have lain in comparative safety), and made straight for the open country, which lay in the direction of some large water meadows adjoining a deep and broad river, in the hopes, we supposed, of giving a fair chance to his running powers. But what convinced us all that it could not be Jim we were following, was the large dog, as he was never known to possess one, which kept close to his master's heels; and whenever the moon shone out, we could see him halt for a second and turn round to have a squint at us, then bound on and rejoin the fugitive, who was making the running at a tremendous pace. On we went over hedge and ditch, sometimes tumbling into a mass of brambles, at others into deep holding bog land and slush, which considerably impeded our progress; but for all this, we gradually gained on our quarry, who, as soon as he noticed we had the foot of him, turned sharp round when he reached the river's bank, and unhesitatingly plunged right into its icy depths, followed by his faithful dog.

'Well, he's a good plucked one at all event,' cried Jackson, who instantly ordered his men to make for a bridge which crossed the river a few hundred yards lower down.

By the time I reached the river I was completely pumped, so took it leisurely, peering into the bushes which grew thickly on its margin as I went along.

On passing a dark clump of alders which threw a shade on the water about fifty yards below where the man had taken the header, I was almost startled out of my skin by hearing a voice from the depths of the river say—

'Is that you, master?'

'Who are you?' I answered.

'It's me, Jim; and don't for God's sake split on me to the keepers, or I shall be ruined for life, and I haven't got much of that left, as I am almost frozen to death.'

For a second I could hardly believe my ears, nor could I make up my mind which course to pursue. Jim would undoubtedly be frozen if he remained much longer in the

water, and he certainly would be caught if he showed himself, for he could not run far in wet clothes; what was I to do? give him up or help him to escape? In another minute it would be too late to do the latter, for I could hear the heavy breathing of the advancing keepers who were now close at hand. But in that time I made up my mind to save him.

So, as soon as they were level with me I called out—

'Get on as fast as you can; he has just crossed, and made in the direction of the Warren' (a small copse on the other side) 'and if you are quick you will catch him before he reaches it.'

I then told 'honest' Jim that the coast was clear, so both he and his dog—who, luckily for him had kept from whining—sneaked out from their watery hiding-place, the former taking a pull at my proffered brandy flask, and then the draggled pair made tracks for their home, where I said I would call on the morrow for an explanation.

So the following day I went there and found Jim ill in bed, from which he never rose again. During his illness he told me under promise of secrecy—which, so long as he lived I kept—the following history of his life; and I do not believe a greater or more cunning poacher ever existed.

During the shooting season he used to retire to bed about six o'clock in the evening. But about eleven or a little earlier his wife would arouse him, and let out of the cellar a lurcher called Jack, who lived underground all day as quiet as a mouse, and whose existence was only known to his master and mistress. On the night planned by this honest couple for a poaching expedition no light was kindled in the cottage.

Secretly and quietly Jim dressed himself in a strong velveteen coat with an immense pocket that ran round under the whole garment, then, collecting his well-tempered wires, gate-nets, purse-nets, and other instruments for the destruction of game, he handled a stout stick, and started off for the woods with his eager and willing companion.

But he never left his cottage by the front gate, always climbing the fence at the bottom of his garden, which adjoined the open fields.

Once out it was his rule never to touch upon a public highway, except in crossing it from hedge to hedge. He knew every old footway, bypath, temporary bridge, drain, water-course, copse, osier bed, and cover in the district; so he chose his locality with skill and caution, set only a few snares as he

went along, and paused to listen at the feeblest unaccustomed noise.

Jim, in truth, was a solitary poacher. He studiously kept from the publichouse, not because he did not relish a glass of beer or cider as well as his confreres, but because he did not wish to be tempted into any interchange of confidences with them. His greatest care when out at night, was to avoid contact with the gang of poachers which also infested our village ; when they were among the woods, our discreet friend always beat a hasty retreat home. But when the coast was clear, and all was silent as the march of the night clouds—when the very woodpigeons were too far gone in sleep to be awoken by the snapping of a dry twig—Jim would quietly open a gate that led into one of the preserves, and spread his net from post to post.

Then, with a wave of his arm, Jack the lurcher would scour the adjoining field in which scores of hares were feeding, driving many of them into the folds of the net, where their struggles were quickly put an end to by a judicious tap on the head from Jim's stick. Having secured as much game as he could conveniently carry, he made for home, picking up the wires he had laid on his way out.

On arriving at his cottage, his wife, who was always up and ready to receive him, helped to conceal the ill-gotten spoils in a small pantry partly sunk into the ground, so that the eaves of the roof which covered it on the outside, touched the wall-flowers in the garden, completely hiding it from the gaze of passers-by. In this larder a secret recess had been made similar to the hatch used in olden times by the Forest of Dean deer stealers.

Into this the game was placed ; and then Jim turned in for a snooze, and was ready the next morning for punctual attendance upon his labours. The principal reason why the keepers never saw or even suspected him of poaching, was that he visited the preserves but seldom, generally selecting a night after a battue, when he knew that the keepers, watchers, and beaters would be all making merry in the servants' hall at the Grange. Then he would sneak off to the cover where the slaughter had taken place, and by the help of Jack's nose, which neglected nothing, carry off all the cripples that had been left behind, without any fear of detection. The proceeds of these midnight forays were easily disposed of by his wife, who had the right of commonage for a cow, besides keeping a good number of poultry, so that on market days at Woodchester—which was some miles distant—

BILLEDON COPLOW.



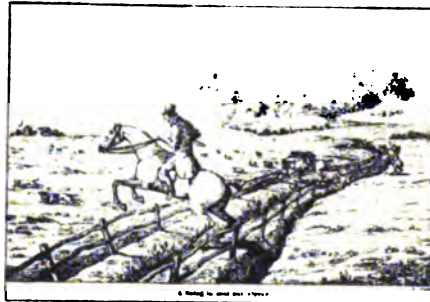
1. Jumping a single jump



2. Jumping a high wall, and clearing the next field



3. Galloping on a fence



4. Jumping a fence and galloping



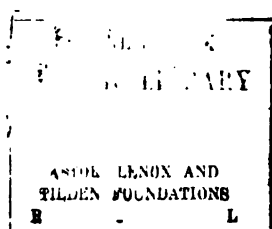
5. Galloping on a fence



6. Galloping on a fence

As every COUNTRY GENTLEMAN may not comprehend the force of this expression, he ought to know, that the MELTONIANS hold every Horse cheap, which cannot GO ALONG A SLAPPING FACE, STAY AT THAT FACE, SEEM RIDGE & FURROW, CATCH HIS HORSES, TOP A FLIGHT OF RAILS, COME WELL INTO THE NEXT FIELD, CHANGE AN OX FENCE, GO IN AND OUT CLEVER, FACE A BROOK, SWIM AT A RASPER, and in short, DO ALL THAT KIND OF THING, phrases so plain & intelligible, that its impossible to mistake their meaning. That Horse is held in the same contempt in LEICESTERSHIRE, as a Government holds a Country Broomstick.

In vulgar Countries (i.e. all others) where these ACCOMPLISHMENTS are not INDISPENSABLE, he may be a Hunter.



she found many purchasers for her 'wares.' And as the buyers and sellers of poached game were equally liable to a penalty, those who bought took very good care not to betray her secret. Jim never recovered the terrible freezing he sustained during his immersion in the river, for it left a severe chill, which settled on his lungs, wearing him down to a skeleton, and before the year's shooting season was over, he had breathed his last.

He was buried beneath an old yew in the village church-yard, and the squire—the sale of whose pheasants and hares had considerably helped to swell the by no means small 'pile' in Jim's name at the savings bank—wiped away a sorrowful tear over the parson's funeral sermon on our pattern man.

BILLESDON COPLOW.*

By THE REV. ROBERT LOWTH.

*'Quæque ipse miserrima vidi,
Et quorum pars magna fui.'*



WITH the wind at north-east, forbiddingly keen,
The Coplow of Billesdon ne'er witnessed, I ween,
Two hundred such horses and men, at a burst,
All determin'd to ride—each resolv'd to be first.
But to get a good start over eager and jealous,
Two-thirds, at the least, of these very fine fellows,
So crowded, and hustled, and jostled, and cross'd,
That they rode the wrong way, and at starting were lost.

In spite of th' unpromising state of the weather,
Away broke the fox, and the hounds close together :
A burst up to Tilton so brilliantly ran
Was scarce ever seen in the mem'ry of man.
What hounds guided scent, or which led the way,
Your bard—to their names quite a stranger—can't say ;
Tho' their names had he known, he is free to confess,
His horse could not show him at such a death-pace.
Villiers, Cholmondeley, and Forester, made such sharp play,
Not omitting Germaine, never seen till to-day :

* Reprinted from the original very scarce edition.

The *Sporting Magazine* of the period says :—'The Billesdon Coplow run took place on Monday, the 24th February, 1800, with a second fox. It was from Billesdon Coplow, Leicestershire, past Tilton Woods, Skeffington Earths, crossing the river Soar below Whitstone, to Enderby Warren, making a distance of twenty-eight miles, which was run in two hours and fifteen minutes.'

Had you judg'd of these four by the trim of their pace,
 At Bib'ry you'd thought they'd been riding a race.
 But these hounds with a scent—how they dash and they fling
 To o'er ride them is quite the impossible thing!
 Disdaining to hang in the wood—thro' he raced,
 And the open for Skeffington gallantly faced,
 Where headed, and foil'd, his first point he forsook,
 And merrily led them a dance o'er the brook.
 Pass'd Galby and Norton, Great Stretton and Small,
 Right onward still sweeping to old Stretton Hall:
 Where two minutes' check serv'd to show, at one ken,
 The extent of the havoc 'mongst horses and men.
 Such sighing, such sobbing, such trotting, such walking—
 Such reeling, such halting, of fences such baulking—
 Such a smoke in the gaps, such comparing of notes—
 Such quizzing each other's daub'd breeches and coats:
 Here a man walk'd afoot, who his horse had half kill'd,
 There you met with a steed who his rider had spill'd:
 In short, such dilemmas, such scrapes, such distress,
 One fox.ne'er occasioned, the knowing confess.
 But, alas! the dilemmas had scarcely began,
 On for Wigston and Ayleston he resolute ran,
 Where a few of the stoutest now slacken'd and panted,
 And many were seen irretrievably planted.
 The high road to Leicester the scoundrel then cross'd,
 As Tell-Tale* and Beaufremont† found to their cost;
 And Villiers esteem'd it a serious bore
 That no longer could Shuttlecock‡ fly as before.
 Even Joe Miller's§ spirit of fun was so broke,
 That he ceased to consider the run as a joke.
 Then streaming away, o'er the river he splash'd—
 Germaine, close at hand, off the bank, Melon|| dash'd.
 Why the Dun prov'd so stout, in a scamper so wild,
 Till now he had only been rode by a Child.¶
 After him plung'd Joe Miller with Musters so slim,
 Who twice sank, and nearly paid dear for his whim,
 Not reflecting that all water melons must swim.
 Well sous'd by their dip, on they brushed o'er the bottom,
 With liquor on board enough to besot 'em:
 But the villain no longer at all at a loss,
 Stretch'd away like a devil for Enderby Gorse:
 Where meeting with many a brother and cousin,
 Who knew how to dance a good hay in the furzen,

* Mr. Forester's horse. † Mr. Maddocks's horse. ‡ Lord Villiers's horse.

§ Mr. Musters's horse. || Mr. Germaine's horse.

¶ Formerly the property of Mr. Child, to whom this hunt is perhaps originally indebted for the present spirited style of riding to hounds.

Jack Raven* at length, coming up on a hack,
Whom a farmer had lent him—whipp'd off the game pack.
Running sulky, old Loadstone† the stream would not swim,
No longer sport proving a magnet to him.


Of mistakes and mishaps, and what each man befel,
Would the Muse could with justice poetical tell!
Bob Grosvenor on Plush‡—tho' determined to ride—
Lost, at first, a good start, and was soon set aside;
'Tho' he charg'd hill and dale, not to lose this rare chase,
On Velvet—Plush could not get footing, alas!

To Tilton sail'd bravely Sir Wheeler O'Cuff,
Where neglecting, thro' hurry, to keep a good luff,
To leeward he drifts—how provoking a case!
And was forc'd, tho' reluctant, to give up the chase.

As making his way to the pack's not his forte,
Sir Lawley,§ as usual, lost half of the sport.
But then the profess'd philosophical creed,
That—'all's for the best'—of Master Candide,
If not comfort Sir R. reconcile may at least;
For, on *this* supposition, *his* sport is the best.

Orby Hunter, who seem'd to be hunting his fate,
Got falls, to the tune of no fewer than eight.

Basan's King|| upon Glimpse,¶ sadly out of condition,
Pull'd up, to avoid of being tir'd the suspicion.
He did right; for Og very soon found,
His worst had he done, he'd have scarce glimps'd a hound.

Charles Meynell, who lay very well with the hounds,
Till of Stretton he nearly arriv'd at the bounds,
Now discover'd that Wagoner** rather would creep,
Than exert his great prowess in taking a leap.
But when crossing the turnpike, he read—' Put on here.'
'Twas enough to make any one bluster and swear.
The Wagoner feeling familiar the road,
Was resolv'd not to quit it; so stock still he stood.
Yet prithee, dear Charles! why rash vows will you make,
Thy leave of old Billesdon †† to finally take?
Since from Segg's Hill, ‡‡ for instance, or perhaps Melton Spinney,
If they go a good pace, you are beat for a guinea!

* The name of the huntsman.

† The huntsman's horse.

‡ Mr. Robert Grosvenor's horse.

§ Sir Robert Lawley—not unusually in the brief dialect of Melton, called Sir Lawley.

|| Mr. Oglander; who, according to the same dialect, goes by the more familiar appellation of Og.

¶ Mr. Oglander's horse.

** Mr. Charles Meynell's horse.

†† He had threatened never again to attempt following the hounds from Billesdon, as no horse could carry his weight up to them in that part of the country.

‡‡ A very different part of the hunt.

'Tis money, they say, makes the mare to go kind :
 The proverb has vouch'd for this time out of mind.
 But tho' of this truth you admit the full force,
 It may not hold so good of every horse.
 If it did, Ellis Charles need not hustle and hug,
 By name, not by nature, his favourite Slug.*
 Yet Slug as he is—the whole of this chase,
 Charles ne'er cou'd have seen, had he gone a snail's pace.

Old Gradus, † whose fretting and fuming at first,
 Disqualifies strangely for such a tight burst,
 Ere to Tilton arriv'd ceas'd to pull and to crave,
 And tho' freshish at Stretton, he stepped a *pas grave* !
 Where, in turning him over a cramp kind of place,
 He overturn'd George, whom he threw on his face :
 And on foot to walk home it had sure been his fate,
 But that soon he was caught, and tied up to a gate.

Near Wigston occur'd a most singular joke,
 Captain Miller averr'd that his leg he had broke,—
 And bemoan'd in most piteous expressions, how hard,
 By so cruel a fracture, to have his sport marr'd.
 In quizzing his friends he felt little remorse,
 To finesse the complete doing up of his horse.
 Had he told a long story of losing a shoe,
 Or of laming his horse, he very well knew
 That the Leicestershire Creed, out this truism worms,
 'Lost shoes and dead beat are synonymous terms.' ‡
 So a horse must here learn, whatever he does—
 To die game—as at Tyburn—and 'die in his shoes.'

Bethel Cox and Tom Smith, Messieurs Bennett and Hawke,
 Their nags all contriv'd to reduce to a walk.

Maynard's Lord, who detests competition and strife,
 As well in the chase as in social life,
 Than whom nobody harder has rode in his time,
 But to crane§ now and then, now thinks it no crime—
 That he beat some crack riders most fairly may crow,
 For he liv'd to the end, tho' he scarcely knows how !

With snaffle and martingale kept in the rear,
 His horse's mouth open half up to his ear,
 Mr. Wardle, who threat'ned great things overnight, ||
 Beyond Stretton was left in most terrible plight.

* Mr. Charles Ellis's horse.

† Mr. George Ellis's horse.

‡ Indeed, so implicit is this article of the Meltonian belief, that many a horse, in addition to the misfortune of breaking his hoof from losing his shoe, has laboured likewise under the aforesaid unavoidable imputation, to his everlasting disgrace.

§ The term derives its origin from the necessary extension of neck of such sportsmen, as dare to incur the reproach, by venturing 'to look before they leap.'

|| Who was said to have threatened that he would beat the whole field the next day

Too lean to be press'd, yet egg'd on by compulsion,
No wonder his nag tumbled into convulsion.
Ah! had he but lost a fore shoe, or fell lame,
'Twould only his sport have curtail'd, not his fame!*

Lorraine,† than whom no one his game plays more safe,
Who the last than the first prefers seeing by half—
What with nicking, ‡ and keeping a constant look-out,
Every turn of the scent surely turn'd to account.
The wonderful pluck of his horse surpris'd some,
But he knew they were making point blank for his home.
'Short home' to be brought we all should desire,
Could we manage the trick like the Enderby Squire.§

Wild Shelley|| at starting, all ears and all eyes,
Who to get a good start all experiments tries,
Yet contriv'd it so ill, as to throw out poor Gipsy,¶
Whom he rattled along as if he'd been tipsy,
To catch them again; but tho' famous for speed,
She never could touch** them, much less get a lead.††
So dishearten'd, ‡‡ disjointed, and beat, home he swings,
Not much unlike a fiddler hung upon strings.

An H. H.§§ who in Leicestershire never had been,
So of course such a tickler||| ne'er could have seen,
Just to see them throw off, on a raw ¶¶ horse was mounted,
Who a hound had ne'er seen, or a fence had confronted.

* For which express purpose, more than *sport*, some are *silly* enough to suppose he hunts; and which, though he did actually succeed in, in *one* instance some seasons ago, he probably never will do again, having threatened it frequently since with as little success.

† Mr. Lorraine Smith.

‡ A term of great reproach, according to the above dialect, to those who are so shabby as to cut across to the hounds, when it is esteemed so much more honourable to follow their very track, by which spirited line of conduct they may be pretty certain of never seeing them at all.

§ Where Mr. Lorraine Smith lives.

|| Sir John Shelley: wild with joy must be here meant, as no one can be personally more serious and sedate; indeed, if the worthy baronet has a foible, it is gravity.

¶ Sir John Shelley's mare.

** According to the Melton dialect, *overtake*.

†† By which is to be understood, securing the privilege of breaking your neck first; and when you fall, of being rode over by a hundred and ninety-nine of the best fellows upon earth to a dead certainty.

‡‡ Nor can that astonish any one when it is considered what an inestimable privilege he has lost.

§§ It is not quite clear whether these initials are meant to apply to a Hampshire hog or the Hampshire hunt. If to the hog, it does not appear that he saved his bacon.

||| (*Meltonice*) A run so severe, that there is no laughing at it.

¶¶ (*Ibid*) A horse who knew nothing of the business he was going about, or wished to know.

But they found in such style,* and went off at such score, †
 That he could not resist the attempt to see more :
 So with scrambling ‡ and dashing,§ and one rattling fall, ||
 He saw all the fun up to Stretton's white Hall.
 There they anchor'd—in plight not a little distressing—
 The horse being raw, he of course got a dressing!

That wonderful mare of Vanneck's, who till now,
 By no chance ever tir'd ¶ was taken in tow :
 And what's worse, she gave Van such a devilish jog
 In the face with her head, plunging out of a bog,
 That with eye black as ink, or as Edward's fam'd prince,
 Half blind has he been, and quite deaf ever since.
 'But let that not mortify thee, Shackaback'—**
 She only was blown, †† and came a rare hack!

There Craven too stopp'd—whose misfortune, not fault,
 His mare unaccountably vex'd with string-halt, ‡‡
 And when she had ceas'd thus spasmodic to prance,
 Her mouth 'gan to twitch with St. Vitus's dance. ††

But how shall describ'd be the fate of Rose Price? §§
 Whose fav'rite white gelding convey'd him so nice

* Style means the best possible manner of doing anything. As for instance, when a man rides his horse full speed at double posts and rails, with a Squire Trap on the other side (which is a moderate ditch of about two yards wide, cut on purpose to break gentlemen's necks), he is then reckoned, at Melton, to have rode it in style, especially if he is caught in the said Squire Trap.

† That kind of pace which perhaps neither you nor your horse ever went before ; and if you have not more luck than falls to the share of every first experiment of the kind, 'tis ten to one but he falls before he can (what they call) get on his legs, in which case you may rest perfectly satisfied that he must roll over you two or three times at least before he can stop himself.

‡ When a horse does not leave above three of his legs behind him, and saves himself by pitching on his head.

§ When a man *charges* a fence (which no other word can express so fully), on the other side of which it is impossible to guess what mischief awaits him, but where his getting a fall is reduced, as nearly as possible, to a moral certainty.

|| Rattling fall: *Q.E.D.*

¶ Which, if other proof were wanting, ascertains beyond any thing else the severity of this chase.

** A familiar appellation, borrowed from Blue Beard, and bestowed by his friends at Melton on Mr. Vanneck, than which nothing can more thoroughly prove the estimation in which his society is held there, since none but good fellows are ever esteemed, according to the Meltonian principles, worthy of a nick-name.

†† His own observation, the merit of which I would scorn to assume, but for the truth of which (at least the latter assertion) I can vouch, as I perfectly agree with him, that I never saw a more complete hack, though he is pleased to call her a hunter.

‡‡ Two nervous affections, in every sense of the word very distressing, especially to a bystander, who cannot command his risible muscles upon so melancholy an occasion.

§§ A gentleman, of whom it has been erroneously said that he never returned from hunting but his horse was sure to be either lame or knocked up.

Thro' thick and thro' thin, that he vow'd and protested,*
 No money should part them, as long as life lasted.
 But the pace † that effected, which money could not :
 For to part—and in death ! was their no distant lot.
 In a fatal blind ditch Carlo Khan's ‡ 'powers fail'd,
 Where nor lancet § nor laudanum § either avail'd.
 More care || of a horse than he took could take no man—
 He'd more straw than would serve any lying-in woman.
 Still he died !—yet just how, as nobody knows,
 It may truly be said—He died 'under the Rose.'
 At the death of poor Khan, Melton ¶ feels such remorse,
 That they've christen'd that ditch 'The Vale of White Horse !'
 Thus ended a chase, which for distance and speed,
 It's fellow we never have heard of, or read.
 Every species of ground, ev'ry horse does not suit,
 What's a good Country Hunter** may here prove a brute,
 And unless for all sorts of strange fences prepar'd,
 A man and his horse are sure to be scar'd.
 This variety gives constant life to the chase ;
 But as Forester †† says, 'Sir, what kills is the pace.'
 In most other countries they boast of their breed,
 For carrying, at times, such a beautiful head ; ‡‡

* At the covert side his horse had been particularly admired, and a considerable sum of money offered for him.

† A complete answer to that impertinent question so vauntingly asked by a favourite poet, when he exclaims, in language indeed somewhat bold, 'Pray what can do that, which money can not ?'

‡ The name of Mr. Price's horse.

§ Two excellent restoratives where the patient is not too far gone.

|| Indeed, it is only to be lamented that Mr. P. had not taken rather more care of him a little earlier in the day, which probably would have obviated the necessity of this *accouchement*.

¶ Which redounds highly to the credit and the sympathy of the Melton gentlemen, and completely refutes a very ill-natured but groundless supposition, that their sensibility will ever suffer them to make a joke of any such heavy loss a gentleman may happen to sustain, especially if the gentleman likewise happens to be heavy himself, which, of course, doubles the weight of the misfortune.

** As every country gentleman may not comprehend the force of this expression, he ought to know that the Meltonians hold every horse that cannot 'Go along a slapping pace,' 'Stay at that pace,' 'Skim ridge and furrow,' 'Catch his horses,' 'Top a flight of rails,' 'Come well in the next field,' 'Charge an ox fence,' 'Go in and out clever,' 'Face a brush,' 'Swish at a rasper,' and, in short, 'Do all that kind of thing,' phrases so plain and intelligible, that it is impossible to mistake their meaning ! A horse is held in the same contempt in Leicestershire as a coxcomb holds a country bumpkin. In vulgar countries (*i.e.*, all others), where these accomplishments are not indispensable, he may be a hunter.

†† A gentleman who practically explains all the above accomplishments to the great edification of young horses, and the no less astonishment of weak minds.

‡‡ A favourite maxim of Mr. Forester's, of the truth of which he seldom loses an opportunity of endeavouring to make his friends thoroughly sensible.

But these hounds to carry a head cannot fail,
 And constantly too—for by George there's—no tail.*
 Talk of horses, and hounds, and the system of kennel—
 Give me Leicestershire nags—and the hounds of Old Meynell.

BETTING UP TO DATE.

By 'TIM WHIFFLER.'

IT is a gambling age we live in, and of a surety betting on horse races was never so prevalent amongst the masses as it is at the present time—not even when the betting lists flourished, and Messrs. Davis (the Leviathan), George Mather, and Valentine & Wright were names to conjure with. The innumerable cheap sporting papers, the principal contents of which seem to be 'tips' for coming events, which crop up perpetually, and apparently all flourish, would be alone sufficient proof if any were wanted. There is no mistake about it, everybody bets: man, woman—one might almost say, without exaggeration—and child.

Take a stroll through a provincial town for a little shopping some fine morning on a day when a big race is coming off, such as the Cesarewitch or Cambridgeshire, and I will venture to say—that is, of course, if you are a bit of a sporting character and are known as such—that by the time you return to your home and luncheon you will have had nearly all the horses entered in the race tipped you by your tradesmen as the probable winner.

I will endeavour to sketch such a morning, in a certain fashionable watering-place in the West of England.

The scene opens at Bloater, the fishmonger's. Bloater, who is an ardent sportsman and hunts regularly with the Duke, having given me the 'straight tip' as regards his fish, follows it up (in a whisper) with the 'griffin' about the Cesarewitch, or, as he calls it, the 'Seizerwitch.' He adds, with a shake of his jolly head, that he has dropped pretty near five hundred pounds since Lincoln, but he thinks he is going to get it back again this

* As heads and tails are not here to be understood in the common acceptation of the words, and as all ladies are not sportswomen enough to be aware that they have no reference to the human head or tail, they should know that when you can 'cover the hounds with a sheet' (which any Meltonian will explain to them more particularly), they are then said to carry a beautiful head; when, on the contrary, they follow the leader in a line like a flight of wild fowls, they are then said to tail.

journey, from what he is told. If the 'good thing' does not come off, he says he shall chuck the game up for the future. Which laudable resolution, we will venture to wager, will *not* come off, whether the 'good thing' does or not.

From Bloater's I march round to Wigsby, the hairdresser's, to indulge in an easy shave. '*I've got it to-day, sir!*' whispers in my ear the young man who always operates on my chin, as he proceeds to lather that portion of my anatomy in an excited fashion.

'Eh? Got *what?*' I exclaim, in horror-struck accents, visions of the measles, or Russian influenza, perhaps D.T., rushing pell mell through my brain. I am painfully nervous about that sort of thing, and, as I think of the last-named disorder, I burst into a cold perspiration, and glance involuntarily at the assistant's hand to see if it trembles, for, dash it all! I don't want my throat cut, don't you know.

'*The winner, sir!*' he murmurs, complacently. Then he goes on: 'I've just cut the 'air of a gent who knows the brother-in-law of the howner of Bluebottle—the favourite, you know, sir—and he says they've backed him for a tremendous lot o' money, and he's *sure* to win. Beg pardon, sir, 'ope I 'aven't cut you, sir—little pimple just there, I rather think.'

Confound the fellow! There was *not* a pimple 'just there,' or anywhere else, on my chin; I never wear pimples! It was a clean cut—a regular gash—and I've a deuced good mind to complain to his master. I would, blessed if I wouldn't, if I did not participate somewhat in his excitement, having backed Bluebottle myself, if the truth must be told. I content myself, therefore, with maintaining a dignified silence, and ignore Bluebottle all the time my hair is being brushed, to the intense disgust, as I can see, of the sporting young barber, who is bursting to unburden himself of his views on racing in general and the Cesarewitch in particular.

From the hairdresser's to the tobacconist, then on to the tailor, and into the hosier's next door—all on something for the big race to a man, you may take your Davy. The only establishments, in fact, where the tone of the conversation is not 'New-market' are the Berlin wool shop and the pastrycook's, whither I go to convey some messages from my wife, and where, necessarily, there are only women—poor, innocent women—who never knew anything about racing and such like wickednesses, of course.

To the club for just a 'little something' after my exertions of the morning, and, entering the billiard-room, find a pool just over, the players putting on their coats to go to lunch, and the marker, who does the club commissions, just off to execute them. Can he do anything more for me? Yes, he can. I can't resist it, dashed if I can. It's weak of me, I know, but I feel I must, and I really think Bluebottle's a good thing, and—'Yes, George, a fiver each way, please, Bluebottle.' That makes a pony, by Jove! I've got on the race. If it don't come off I won't bet again—at least, not until next time.

Home to lunch. As my footman-butler opens the door I can perceive the corner of the *Sporting Life* peeping out of his pocket. He's on something, the rascal, depend upon it. Happy thought! Hope the plate won't be brought into requisition on settling day.

It really is terrible the spirit of gambling that pervades the land.

Joking apart, what I have just written is a by no means extravagant sketch of what goes on, on a big race day, in every one of our towns in England, as, I feel sure, any one with any knowledge of life will testify.

No wonder the bookies get fat, for, after all, it is the small punter he thrives on—especially the small punter who likes a good outsider, and never can resist a hundred to one chance. All sorts of men turn into bookies in country towns. I heard of one, who died not long ago worth some thousands of pounds, who had been ostler at the principal inn of the place only a very few years before. Stranger still, I heard of a railway-guard—I won't say on what line—who made a book, and did a rare business at the different stations on his 'up' journey on the morning of a big race day.

But if all sorts of queer people turn into bookies, how about the backers. A bookie in a country town said to me once, 'You'd never believe, unless you were a witness, the people who come in here with their little bits of paper' (the bookie in question kept a public, and took no ready money). 'To give you an example. One day a young fellow came in here whom I knew to be a School Board teacher and having something to do with the Young Men's Christian Association. Such a reputation he had, too! Oh! he was much too good for this wicked world, I do assure you! Well, sir, he ordered a bottle of lemonade, drank it, paid for it, heaved a deep sigh, handed me

a slip of paper, and walked solemnly out of the place, looking as if butter wouldn't melt in his mouth.

'What was on the bit of paper?'

'Why, "Please put me on 2*l.* each way on Pot Boy for the Tippelcidershire Stakes to-morrow.—Joseph Surface."

Pot Boy started at ten to one, and won in a canter. It was the one 'good thing' of the meeting, in fact.

As for the ladies who bet now, their name is legion. And our wives and our sisters, and our cousins and our aunts, are as well up in the betting market as ourselves, bless them. If you don't believe me, the next time your loved one asks you to do a commission for her—for the Ascot Stakes, say—offer her, for the fun of the thing, a shade or two under the odds, and see what she says. I don't think you'll try it on again.

A dear old lady of my acquaintance once made a funny bet that is worth recording. Much exercised in her mind by the circulars which used to arrive regularly every week addressed to her absent son, a rapid youth in a marching regiment, she at last opened one, and found it to be a circular emanating from one of the Boulogne betting commissioners. Its contents so fascinated her that, finding out the date of the next big race, she determined to have a flutter on her own account. The race was the Liverpool Cup, for which two horses were equal favourites, so she wrote a cheque for 2*l.*, and, forwarding it to the Boulogne commissioner, requested him to back with it *whichever of the two favourites he thought would win!* Whether it was only a fluke, or whether the commissioner was giving the old lady what the horse dealers call a 'sweetener,' I cannot say; but true it is he put his fair client on the winner. Needless to say, after that a good many of my sporting old friend's small cheques found their way to Boulogne, but, I fear, never again with the same pleasant results.

We English people are awful humbugs, when one comes to think of it. As long as England is England, and Englishmen are Englishmen, we shall always back our opinion, depend upon it. It is our nature *to*, as good old Dr. Watts puts it—and Dr. Watts, in my opinion, knew a thing or two. Knowing this, then, as we do, and being also well aware that this is a free country, and that therefore it is impossible to stop betting by Act of Parliament, why in the name of fortune cannot we legalise the thing properly?—have our bookies over here, in fact, instead of sending them into what Mickey Free would call

“foreign parts,” and license them just the same as any other malefactor necessary to our existence, and thus enable the poor punter to back his fancy like a gentleman, instead of having to send his money off to some outlandish place in Holland or elsewhere.

It is just on the cards that the turf commissioner never would have been exiled from his native land at all had not one of them, in an unfortunate moment, forestalled Lord Hardwicke, then Lord Royston, when he wanted to back his horse *The Drummer* for the City and Suburban. Determined on revenge, his angry lordship got a Bill passed through the House of Lords prohibiting betting-houses in general and that of Mr. William Wright, of Covent Garden, the forestaller in question, in particular, the consequence being that the whole tribe had either to give up the business or fly to foreign climes. Though the betting offices proper were closed to the public, however, there were plenty of places where the initiated sportsman could always back his fancy if he chose—innocent little cigar shops, where very few cigars were sold, and at which the policeman on duty, also his inspector, winked the other eye as he passed. Mr. John Percival’s little establishment in Panton Street was a good specimen. We can see it now on a race morning, with ‘Ginger’ Stubbs sitting on the cigar chest by the door, and Bob Hope-Johnstone popping a fiver on something, whilst he undergoes a running fire of chaff from the owner of the divan at his being suddenly so flush of money.

The cigar divan is a dream of the past; but Mr. John Percival, more rosy and prosperous looking than ever, is still, as I need hardly tell my racing readers, very much to the fore in the ring of which he is such a distinguished ornament.

As I said just now, we are a shocking lot of humbugs. The same virtuous Government that suppresses all the betting-houses lets the ‘bucket shop’ proprietor run loose. The latter’s alluring advertisements in the papers day by day are quite sufficient witnesses of what a paying game it is; whilst the annals of the police courts and the Old Bailey could many a tale unfold about the ruin and misery caused by the swindling ‘bucket shop’ proprietor.

Many a man who would shudder at the bare idea of putting a ‘tenner’ on a racehorse will gamble day after day on the Stock Exchange—speculating he calls it—in the calmest manner. What the difference between this sort of person and

another that backs his opinion on a racecourse is, I never could make out, except that one is a hypocrite and the other isn't.

THE POTOMAC 'MIKROPTHEROS.'

By 'OLD IZAAC.'

BELOW Harper's Ferry there is one of the most picturesque reaches of the Potomac River. From the rugged heights that frown upon that historic and lovely spot, where the Shenandoah strikes away through the pass that leads to the broad and beautiful valley of Virginia, the river chafes from side to side of the stern defile that hems it in, and curbs its restless waters. Great walls of dark rocks, crested by serried ranks of solemn pines, stand guard above its fitful, surging flood, and against the dark blue calm and misty depths of its gorge, the pale smoke rises in a quiet column from the mills and houses that nestle by the river bed. Lower down the river widens, and has long placid reaches, but for the most part its banks are precipitous, and the deep water runs along the trunks and bares the roots of trees whose great branches stretch far out over the surface. On the broad flat rocks one sees dozens of mud-turtles, and occasionally an otter peeps just above the water; small coteries of summer ducks also now and again enliven the scene with their strong, swift flight.

My attendant was an Irishman, named O'Neil, brimful of the wit and blundering exuberance of the race, and the precise point of departure was the point of rocks by the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal. Thence we were to proceed up the canal about four miles, and then, launching the boats in the river, fish down stream.

'Yill take care, sorr, an' sit fair in the middle of the skhiff!' said O'Neil, as I got into the frail craft. 'It's onconvenient to be outside av the boat whin yer're going through thim locks? There were a gintleman done that last year, an' he came near lavin' a lot o' orphans behind him.'

'How was that, O'Neil?' said I.

'Begorra, the devil a child had he!' he answered.

'But do you mean that he was drowned?'

'Faith! and he was that, sorr—complatly!'

I promised Mr. O'Neil that I would observe his instructions, and that gentleman, after lifting in our various impedimenta, deposited himself in the bow, and we proceeded. We had two boats (my companion and myself), and an experienced man in each. O'Neil had fallen to my lot, and my companion had a darkey named Pete. We had a horse and a tow rope, and a small boy to ride the animal, which he did at a smart trot, rendering our progress swift and exhilarating. It was a lovely morning, and promised a day, as Mr. O'Neil remarked, on which some 'illegant' fish would probably die. After a few delays at the locks, we reached our point of transshipment, hauled the boats out on the bank, and one by one drew them sleigh fashion across field and down to, and out into, the water of the river.

I had a light split, bamboo rod, a good silk line, and a fair assortment of flies. Mr. O'Neil had a common bamboo cane, a battered old reel, and the value of his outfit might be generously estimated at half-a-dollar. In his bait-can were a hundred fish or so about the size of gudgeons; he did not, however, prepare to fish himself, but was watching me with deep attention. He pushed the boat across the stream to the opposite shore, and by the time we had dropped down to a large flat rock, I was ready. I got out and made my casts with the greatest ease, sending the flies in all directions, sometimes with fifty and sixty feet of line, admiring all the while the soft flutter with which the flies dropped one after the other. All this time Mr. O'Neil was surveying my skill critically, nodding his head with approval from time to time, and uttering short ejaculations of the most flattering nature. I kept whipping the stream diligently, being assured that no properly constituted fish could resist the neat fall of the lure and line. But there was no appearance of a rise, and I began to think there were no fish there, and I was about to remark it to Mr. O'Neil, when that worthy said,

'Begorra! but its illigant sport it 'ud be if the bass 'ud only bite at thim things.'

'Bite at them!' I said, 'of course they'll bite at them.'

'Sorra a bit will they, sorr. Its just wondherin, they are if them things up above is good to ate, but they're too lazy to step up and enquire. Augh, be my soul! but it's the truth I tell ye. Now, if it was a dacent throuth that were there, he'd be after acceptin' yer invite in a minit, but thim bass—begorra, they're not amaynable to the fly at all at all.'

Now, I don't like bait fishing for any fish that will take a

fly, and I said so. Furthermore, I opined openly that there weren't any bass in the neighbourhood. The idea of their rejecting flies served up as mine were, was preposterous.

'Well,' said he, 'ye may be roight, sorr; there may be none there at all, but I'll just thry them with a bit, anyhow.'

In another minute Mr. O'Neil was slashing about, right and left, with a bait that seemed, to me, as big and ugly as a Scotch red herring. He, however, threw it with some precision, though a considerable amount of energy was also put into the process, and I turned away with saddened feelings to continue my fly fishing. Presently I heard an exclamation from O'Neil, quickly succeeded by an ominous whirr of the reel.

'Luke at the vagabone, sorr! luke at him now! Run, yer divil ye,' he cried, as he facilitated the line, which was already running out at a famous rate. 'Bedad! he's a foine "mikropteros." Whist, he's stopped; take that, ye spalpeen ye!'

As he said this, he gave his rod a strong jerk that brought the line up out of the water, and the old bamboo bent until it cracked. At the same moment a splendid fish, leaped up into the air a hundred feet away, with the line attached to it. Mr. O'Neil had struck the hook in firmly, and away he went across the stream, as hard as he could tear.

'Take the rod, sorr, while I git the landing net. Kape a toight line on him, sorr, niver let him deludher ye. It's an illigant mikropteros, he is, to be sure.'

He returned to the boat in a moment with the net, but absolutely refused to take back the rod.

'Sorra a bit, sorr; bring him in. It's great fun ye'll have wid the vagabone in that current. No, sorr, bring him in yerself, sorr, ye'll niver lay it at my door that the first fish hooked wasn't brought in.'

I don't need instruction, and as the fish ran for a rock some distance off, I brought him up sharply, and he jumped again as wickedly as he could, full three feet out of the water, and came straight towards us with a rush. It was no use trying, I couldn't reel in fast enough with O'Neil's crazy old reel, and he was in the eddy at my feet before one third of the line was reeled in. Fortunately, he was securely hooked, and the hook did not drop out from the slackening of the line. He was in about twelve feet of water, and I brought the line taut on his face; off he went again into the current, as fast as before. I had the current full against him this time, however, and brought him steadily

up through it, and held him well in hand. I swept him round to the landing net, but he sheered off so quickly that I thought he would have broken everything. Away he went, as stiffly and stubbornly as possible, and there he lodged, apparently rubbing his nose against the rock to get the hook out—I felt quite that sensation. Half-a-dozen times I dislodged him, and brought him up, but he was so wild and strong I did not dare to force him. At last, with a quick turn of the wrist, O'Neil scooped him out *volens volens* on to the rock. He weighed four pounds six ounces, and had fought up to every particle of that weight.

'What was it you called him when you struck him just now?' I inquired, blandly.

'What did I call him, sorr? a mikropteros, sorr.'

'And for goodness sake, Mr. O'Neil, what is a mikropteros?'

'Begorra, that's what it is,' said Mr. O'Neil, as he slid a leathern thong through the fish's gills, and threw the fish into the water, tethered to the boat.

'Well,' said I, with amazement, 'I never heard such a name as that for a fish in my life!—a mikropteros!'

'Divil more nor less, sorr,' said Mr. O'Neil, decidedly; 'the fish commissioner wor up here last week, and sez he to me, sez he, "It's a mikropteros, so it is!" "What's that?" sez I. "That," sez he, and he slaps him into an illigant glass bottle of spirits, as I thought he was going to say to me, "O'Neil, have ye a mouth on ye," and I as dhry as if I'd lived on saltptre for a week. "Yis," sez he to me, "that's his right name," and with that he wroites it on a tag and sends it off, this side up, to the musayum. Sure I copied it, and if ye doubt me worr'd, sorr, sure, here it is.'

With that O'Neil pulled off his hat, and handed me from it a piece of paper torn off the margin of a newspaper, on which was written in letters more legible than graceful, '*Micropteros Salmoides*.' I read it gravely and smiled feebly at my own ignorance, and then returned it to him.

'You are perfectly right, O'Neil,' I said, 'what a blessing it is to have a classical education.'

'Sorra a lie in that, sorr,' says he, as the slip was being replaced in the corner of his hat, 'an' it's meself that's proud av it.'

* * * * *

I must here confess to a wholesale conversion, for the rest of the day, to the style of fishing practised by Mr. O'Neil, and

after rigging up suitable tackle, I began to fish with an enthusiasm to which I had been a stranger when perforce resorting to live bait before. It was not long before down went the split cork I had attached as a float, and I incontinently struck. My hook, line, and float came up promptly, but the steel was bare—'Mikropteros' had taken the bait.

'Divvle a wonder, sorr,' said O'Neil, 'seein' as you're not familiar with their ways. Yer see, sorr, he comes up an' nips that fish be the tail, and away wid him to a convaynient spot for to turn him and swallow him head first by rason of his sthicles and fins all pintin' the other way. Whin he takes it, sorr, jist let him run away wid it as far as he likes, but the minit he turns to swallow it, and says to himself, 'What an illigant breakfast this is, to be sure,' that minit slap the hook into his jaw, and hould on to him like death to a dying naygur.'

I obeyed Mr. O'Neil to the letter, and during the day got twenty-four fine specimens of O'Neil's *Mikropteros Salmoides*.

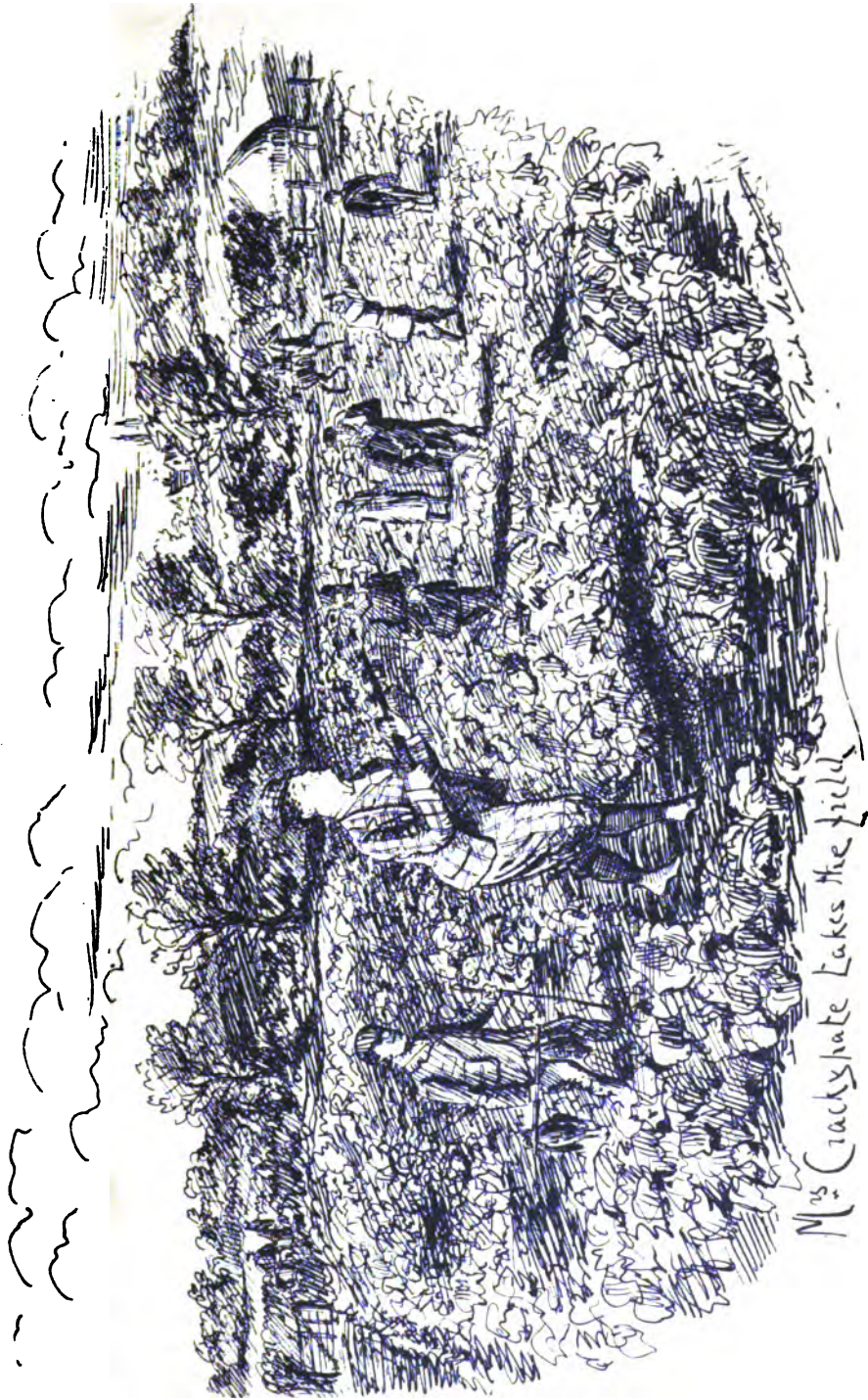
WHY MRS. CRACKYPATE GAVE UP HUNTING.

Related (with tears of joy) by HER HUSBAND.

HURRAH! I am just about to sit down to dinner, tête-à-tête, with my old and valued friend, Jack Hopkins, having about me just about the finest appetite and the clearest conscience that ever a gentleman and a sportsman found himself the happy possessor of. It is a good little dinner, too, though but a simple one: *Potage à la Reine* (my cook prides herself on her *purées*); cod and oyster sauce, *Vol au vent à la Toulouse*; a diminutive leg of four-year-old Welsh mutton, sent to me last week by its grower, a friend of mine in the Principality, hung to an hour, and its own fine natural flavour improved upon by the introduction of a piece of garlic, which, reposing snugly in the pope's eye, sends a *souppçon* of its pungent self through the whole joint (a dodge worth knowing this); a woodcock; a *soufflé* pudding; and a Norwegian anchovy on toast to wind up with. There is no doubt about it, I have fairly earned my dinner for once. My beloved wife (at present in bed, suffering from a severe chill

and a shock to the system, the result of being immersed in a bog this very day whilst following the hounds) has solemnly announced her decision, to my unbounded satisfaction, of giving up her intention of participating in the noble science of foxhunting, for ever and a day. And this highly satisfactory resolution on her part having been brought about solely by me, is it to be wondered at, that I feel a natural pride in my own cleverness, and as I have before mentioned, am prepared to enjoy a good dinner, with more than my usual gusto?

I am afraid I must say at once that I am one of those who detest the presence of the softer sex in the hunting field. Let them come to the meet by all manner of means; their presence thereat is welcome, if only for ornament, but when the hounds move off, let the ladies move off too, I say, only in another direction, viz., the hounds go off to draw for a fox, and the ladies go off to home and luncheon. How glad then are we hunting men to see them again on our return from the chase! As that shrewd observer, Soapy Sponge, says, women never look so well as when one comes in wet and dirty from hunting. There are two classes of female women who honour the hunting field with their presence, viz., the ladies who can ride, and the ladies who can't, and I don't know really which are the greater nuisance of the two. The former, besides constantly getting in your way at the fences, knocking you out of your stride, &c., are, as often as not, quite capable of showing you the way, 'customer' as you think yourself, and no doubt are when in the vein; but it is excessively annoying on a day when your nerve is not altogether what you could wish, to pound along in the wake of a hard-riding damsel; jumping a lot of big places you would otherwise have shirked, but that you don't like being 'cut down and hung up to dry' by a lady, don't you know. Then the ladies who can't ride, are always coming to grief, and requiring to be picked up and comforted, and of course seen home; or they will insist on sticking to you, because you know the country so well; the annoyance being that when they find, instead of being in your usual place close to the tail of the hounds, you find yourself either escorting Miss Muffet and Co. through a series of bridle gates to the point you think the fox is making for, or else, what is worse, riding the line, gallantly piloting your fair companions over the gaps, and occasionally varying the entertainment by getting down from your horse to give some timid young creature a lead over.



Mrs Crackshate Takes the field

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To return to my wife, at whose renunciation of the chase I am so pleased. That dear companion of my joys and sorrows has during the ten years of our married life participated freely in every amusement indulged in by her own fond husband, except hunting. I therefore naturally fancied myself safe, so far as my wife was concerned, and no more dreamt of ever being required to pilot her with hounds than flying over the moon.

Judge then of my disgust when, one October morning at breakfast, my better half announced her intention of going regularly in for hunting this season. I tried hard to dissuade her by recounting all the dreadful accidents I could think of that had happened to ladies in the hunting field. I talked of noses broken, eyes blacked, teeth knocked down throats—in fact, conjured up all the horrors I could pile together for her benefit; but without the slightest effect.

Her suddenly taking to shooting a year or two ago was bad enough, but that luckily was a very short-lived fad of hers. How she was choked off that wasn't bad. It happened in this wise. My wife and I were at a garden party at the Tollingtons' one fine afternoon in September, when who should come up but a boisterous neighbour of mine, Bounderby by name. Having greeted us heartily as usual, he begun at once with, 'I say, old boy, who on earth was that stout party shooting with you in that big turnip field next the road last Thursday? He was a thundering bad shot, whoever he was—too fat I should say—what? I tell you what he reminded me of—a roly-poly pudding dressed up in a plaid suit. I sat on my pony and roared with laughter at you and fatty for quite half an hour, I should think. Ha, ha, ha! Who was he, Mrs. Crackypate? *do* tell me, I am dying to know,' went on the wretched man, little dreaming that he was addressing the dressed-up roly-poly pudding at that identical moment. Luckily Bounderby's attention was drawn off by little Miss Larkins opportunely rushing up to claim him for a partner at lawn-tennis, so he went hastily off without getting the information he required, otherwise I fancy, from the exceedingly red face suddenly acquired by my wife, the short manner in which she breathed, and the feverish way she used her fan, that in all probability there would have been a scene. As it was, though secretly glad, for I guessed that it would put a stop to my wife disporting herself for the future in knickerbockers and making herself hot and uncomfortable in pursuit of the partridge, still I was ready to sink into my shoes with annoyance at the

unconscious Bounderby's description of my stout shooting companion. Of course, I did not tell her this in so many words, but I just hinted to my wife that afternoon, as we drove home from the Tollingtons, that if ladies—especially when they are of the fat, fair, and forty order—*will* go out of their way to make exhibitions of themselves, they must be prepared to take the consequences occasionally.

I may as well add that the results of Bounderby's elegant conversation at the Tollington party were, first of all, the throwing into the fire of Mrs. Crackypate's game licence, followed by the disappearance from the scene of her gun (specially built for her by Boss), her knickerbocker suit, scarlet stockings, and shooting boots. May they rest in peace. The errant Bounderby, I need scarcely say, was never taken into favour again.

Fishing my wife goes in for, and, I must add, with considerable success; and as she does not think proper to make a guy of herself in the matter of dress, I have no earthly objection to her piscatorial efforts—on the contrary, I encourage her in the sport, for, being no fisherman myself, I find it very pleasant on a hot day to sit down under a tree with a cigar in my mouth and look on whilst my better half flogs the water assiduously; nay, more than that, the trout being, in my humble opinion, a toothsome morsel, I am only too happy when Mrs. C. hooks a fish—which, I am bound to say, she often does—to run to her assistance with the landing-net, and help to bring the speckled denizen of the river to bank.

Racing, too, my energetic better half once had a little flutter at, and burnt her fingers so smartly at the very first start that she soon cried a go. In point of fact, having rashly backed fifteen horses, one after another, for the Cambridgeshire, and then not succeeding in spotting the winner, she wisely came to the conclusion that racing was a fraud, and that the less she had to say to it the better, so she gave it up from that moment.

Such harmless amusements as lawn-tennis and archery of course she went in for, and altogether I was well satisfied, thinking that now her shooting had been knocked on the head by Bounderby (whom I secretly cherish as one of the best friends I ever had), she was not likely to try her hand for the future at anything in the way of sport that would be liable to make herself and me look ridiculous in the eyes of our neighbours.

I was counting my chicks, however, before they were hatched, as it turned out, and when, as I have related, my wife announced

her intention of forthwith going in for hunting, you might, as the saying is, have knocked me down with a feather.

There was nothing to be done of course, except for a wilful woman to have her own way, and the next move on the board was to provide my lady with a hunter, the horse upon which she was in the habit of disporting herself on the 'ard 'igh road, being quite unfit for the purpose, for besides being as old as the hills, he had in all probability never made a jump in his life. For the matter of that, neither had his mistress, though she declined to own to it. But she had lots of pluck, and unlimited confidence in herself and her powers of sticking on; a confidence by no means shared by me, for I am bound to confess a worse seat on a horse than that possessed by my lady wife I never yet beheld. I shudder when I think of that dreadful butter and eggs trot of hers. You can generally tell whether a woman can ride or not, when she begins to trot. When I had recovered from the first shock of my wife's announcement, I ventured to ask her who had put the notion into her head, and then it turned out that Lady Fitzfaddle, the head of the Primrose League in our part of the world, had been at her on the subject.

'It does such a lot of good my dear amongst the Radical farmers,' she told my wife; and the latter being a red hot dame of the League, believed her thoroughly, and determined forthwith to hunt, if only with the object of serving what she was pleased to call the 'Good Cause.' Nor was that all. Lady Fitzfaddle, who was as fast as you please, and ought, in my opinion, to have been a man, was in the habit of coming out hunting attired in a velvet cap and the scarlet coat and yellow collar of the Upsy-downshire hunt. What was my horror when my wife informed me that she had written to town to the great Mr. Heath for a cap, and had ordered a scarlet coat from Tom Goose the Sloperton tailor. This was too much. 'Hang it all! Jane,' I bust forth in my wrath, 'you might at least I think, have gone to a London man for your habit, instead of a wretched country tinker like Goose, who is certain not to fit you.'

'My dear,' was the reply, 'he is one of *us*, a member of the League—hates Gladstone like poison, and would go through fire and water for the Good Cause. Lady Fitzfaddle too, most particularly begged me to give him an order the very first opportunity, and here it is. I am sure he will do his best, poor little man, and I have no doubt will fit me well.'

After this I said no more, but retired forthwith to try and

soothe my ruffled feelings with a cigar, and at the same time have a talk with my groom as to which, if any, of my hunters might be capable of carrying Mrs. Crackypate in the coming campaign. After a lengthened discussion, it was decided to set apart 'Marshal Prim,' the steadiest and best hunter in my stable, for Mrs. C.'s sole use, and in the meantime, the old horse was to be exercised every day with a skirt attached to his rider's legs, so as to get him accustomed to carrying a habit, the old horse never yet, as far as I knew, having been ridden by a lady.

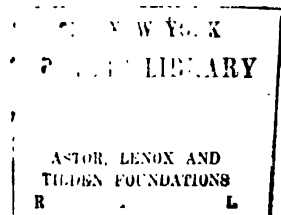
MR. CRACKYPATE'S DIARY, *Nov. 1st, 188—*. 'The first meet of the season of the Upsydownshire hounds came off this morning at Cockle Park, Sir Paul Perywinkle's place. One of the largest crowds gathered together I ever remember to have seen. Never shall I forget the sensation we created as my wife and I, the former duly rigged out in the velvet cap procured from the mammoth establishment of Mr. Heath and the scarlet jacket—the latter vilely made, as I said all along it would be, by that rascal, Tom Goose—and the badge of the Primrose League in the form of a scarf pin, stuck conspicuously in her white tie—cantered becomingly up to the meet. The men (it made me so mad to see it) were obliged to turn their heads away to avoid laughing outright, and the ladies, headed by that tom-boy of a Lady Fitzfaddle, took no pains to conceal their merriment. I never felt so ashamed in my life—even Marshal Prim, good old horse, looked dull and spiritless, as if he didn't care much for his burden. Both of us got off and went into the house, and partook of the elaborate breakfast accompanied by unlimited champagne provided so hospitably by Sir Paul for all comers. Mrs. C., exhilarated by sundry glasses of the Boy, announces her intention of cutting down everybody, and riding over Sir Paul himself, if he gets in her way. Up on our horses again, and away to the Osier Bed (a sure find). Two, if not three foxes at home, and one gets away in fine style. For once in a way I take things quietly, and letting the crowd go first, my wife and I gallop on in the rear, taking all the gaps, of which there are plenty, thank goodness! as they come.

All goes well, until in a weak moment, my wife, who is charmed (as well she may be), with the perfect manners of Marshal Prim, and unduly elated at her success at the gaps, suddenly leaves my side, and putting the old horse at a gallop, charges wildly a low rail, the top bar of which has been broken off, that separates us from the next inclosure, a rushy, swampy



Jack Harris

Stick to him and the old horse will pull through



looking piece of waste land, with a lot of Scotch cattle feeding on it, and in another second is head over heels in a bog. 'What a fall was there!' as Shakespeare says. Flounder—Flounder—Ough—Grunt—went poor old Marshal Prim. Scream, screech—scream. 'The earth is swallowing me up!' shrieked my wife, in an agony of terror.

'Stick to him, and the old horse will pull you through,' yelled I, getting off my horse and getting over the rails on to sound ground a little lower down. I was right. Just as I got to the edge of the bog, the gallant old 'Marshal,' with one supreme effort, and a terrific grunt, got himself clear, and now stood trembling and exhausted on *terra firma*. Which was the dirtier of the pair, Marshal Prim or my beloved wife, I should be sorry to say. Luckily the falling was delightfully soft and easy, so that my wife was considerably more frightened than hurt, and the only damage done was to Tom Goose's ill-made red coat. As she drained the last drop of sherry from my flask preparatory to starting off home again, the following words falling from her lips sounded like sweet music in my ears:

'Oh! Augustus, you were quite right, all along, and I was wrong—utterly wrong. The hunting field is no place for ladies—not even for dames of the Primrose League. I will never go out hunting again, Augustus, as long as I live.'

TALES FROM THE MOFUSSIL.

By D. F. O.

I.—THE SURPRISE.

IT is many years ago now—more years, in fact, than I care to remember—that the occurrence which I am about to relate took place. I was a youngster but lately arrived in the burning land of Ind, full of life and energy, and eager to distinguish myself in the pursuit of sport, an occupation—or is it a pastime?—in which most of my brother-officers were proficient. I was stationed in the Berars, and was the happy possessor of a double-barrelled, pin-fire, smooth-bore, breechloader—centre fires had hardly come into vogue in those days, and a good many men, especially sportsmen of the older school, were then equipped with muzzle-

loaders, weapons built usually either by Joe Manton or Egg. My gun carried ball fairly well, but being a smooth-bore it could not be relied upon over a hundred yards. The particular day to which I am now alluding was an off day, no work to hand, and so I had determined to devote it to *shikar*.

Early in the morning I sallied forth from my tent, my attendant, old Abba, carrying my cartridge belt and game bag, while I had my trusty weapon upon my shoulder. We had not proceeded very far when my lynx-eyed follower espied a herd of *nilgai*, or blue bull, some distance away. Had I been an older and more experienced sportsman I would have left them alone, for tongue and marrow-bones excepted, blue bull is mighty tough eating, and neither skin nor horns afford satisfactory trophies of the chase; add to this that they are—in open country at least—as wild as hawks, and you will probably agree with me that they are not animals which repay the trouble of circumvention. But, alas! I was young, green, and enthusiastic, and so I fell into the trap forthwith, and proceeded to stalk that herd of wily *nilgai*. I feel convinced from their behaviour—looking back in the light of wider experience—that those animals knew perfectly well that I was a griffin, and not up to much, that I had only a smooth-bore, and therefore need not be much dreaded, for they did not disturb themselves about me in the least, just quietly edging off as I approached, and keeping always from two hundred to two hundred and fifty yards away. They played with me thus for some five hours or more, for I followed those wretched creatures from six o'clock till past eleven, by which time it had become tolerably hot, the sun and burning wind towards the latter end of March being anything but invigorating. Under circumstances like these one begins to have a feeling for a mutton chop on a gridiron or for a rasher of bacon in a frying-pan. I was getting very sick of it all, being tired and weary; the quarry I had in view seemed, even to me, to be unattainable, and I was getting farther and farther away from camp and tub and breakfast. The country, too, was changing in character; hitherto the chase had been confined to the open and to cultivated fields—fields which the patient husbandman was already ploughing and breaking-up in readiness for the advent of the monsoon rains which usually take place in the early part of June—but now we were getting into broken ground, low hills, cut up in the valleys between by deep *nalahs* and small ravines, and clothed with

low bushes and patches of brushwood of varying densities. While I was thus becoming weary and disgusted, and was turning over in my mind the advisability of giving up my friends the *nilgai* for the present, an incident occurred which determined my future movements—this was the kicking up of a hare from one of the bushes aforesaid. Puss was apparently not very much alarmed at my intrusion, for—perhaps the great heat had something to do with her leisurely movements—she just cantered quietly along for some thirty yards or so, entered another clump of bushes and brushwood, and disappeared from view. ‘A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.’ I thought out the problem rapidly, and, metaphorically, whistling the *nilgai* down the wind, determined to have a try for the new game, visions of jugged hare, &c., floating rapturously before my gastronomical vision. Slipping then the ball cartridge out of my right barrel, I hastily substituted a No. 4, and walked up to the ambush in which my friend had ensconced herself. An ambush it proved to be in very truth! Never shall I forget the start that I received. I had got to within some five yards of the hare’s place of retreat, and with right barrel on full cock was eagerly expecting her to break, when with a rush and a bustle which simply defy description, a huge animal burst out on the further side of the cover. My first idea was pig, but a second glance showed it to be a large hyena with poor puss in his jaws, carried transversely. By the time I had pulled myself together a bit the brute had got some twelve or fifteen yards away, when I took aim and let him have it; but, alas! in my flurry I fired the right barrel which had only No. 4 shot in it, and so the beast held on. I gave him the left with ball and missed him clean, and that hyena fled away with *my* hare in his mouth—for I had looked on that hare as being as good as jugged—and I believe perfectly unscathed, for at the distance at which I fired my first barrel the shot could not have had time to scatter, but would have been as effectual as any bullet. I did not get back to camp till past two o’clock that day, a sadder and a wiser man, perhaps, certainly a very cross one.

II.—THE MAN-EATER.

IT was when I was working in Mysore that I came on my man-eater, and I was very lucky in getting her as easily as I did, an opinion in which I am sure all who read the following lines will concur. I was working on the borders of the Mysore

maluad or hilly (literally rainy) country, where the frosts are very heavy and extensive, and within the range of my operations a *man-eater* had recently put in its appearance, and was making itself the terror of the people inhabiting the country round. Of course, I moved camp as soon as I could to the reputed centre of the dreaded beast's haunt in order to try conclusions with it at the first opportunity that presented itself; nor had I long to wait, for at about half-past four in the afternoon of the second day after my arrival at the place, shrilleries from the herd-boys tending the cattle on the slopes of the hill just above my camp told me that something was on foot, and presently in rushed Abba, my *shikar peon*, to tell me that the tiger was there. To get hold of my rifle and start out did not take very long; but I was not fated to see *stripes* on that occasion, and perhaps, all things considered, it was just as well that I did not, for it was not *very* safe work to go kicking up *any* tiger like a rabbit, much less a tiger that is said to have a partiality for lunching off man. Still, there was 'a method in my madness.' I wanted to bag that tiger very badly, and any apparent want of keenness on my part would have tended to discredit my sporting character in the eyes of the natives about; any slackness, as also want of luck at your first opportunity, militates very greatly against sport being shown you. Bag your first animal with your first shot and you are at once put down as an A1 *shikari*; miss, and the opposite opinion is formed, and it takes some time to reverse first impressions, especially in the minds of these people of few ideas.

This line of conduct soon bore fruit. A little after mid-day on the Sunday following, while I was enjoying a suggestion of *dolce far niente* in my tent, an elderly man suddenly rushed in, threw himself at my feet, and in broken accents informed me that his only son had been killed that very morning, about an hour previously, by the man-eater. The old fellow's curses on the brute were loud and deep, and his lamentations for his son were most pitiable to hear. To the orthodox Hindu the loss of an only son, as in this case, is particularly heavy if taken merely from a religious point of view, leaving out of sight the natural affection side of the question, and so the old man's agitation was not to be wondered at. We were soon, however, at work; Abba got out the guns and cartridges, the ladder—in Mysore it is usual to make use of ladders, which are ordinarily fourteen to fifteen feet in length, when beating for game—was hoisted on to the heads of *coolies* (Anglicè porters), I got into my shooting clothes, and in

ten minutes we were off. Our first move was to the kill, which had taken place at a distance of about two and a half miles from my camp. The unfortunate boy had been left where he had been struck down. He was a lad of some fifteen or sixteen years of age, and was clothed—if one can call it being clothed—in a piece of cloth wrapped round his loins. There were deep claw marks on his sides, and the marks of teeth in the back of the neck ; all the muscles and veins in the neck were limp, and the neck itself had fallen in, presenting exactly the same appearance as does the neck of any animal that has been slain by a tiger or a panther. I am inclined, therefore, to think that after killing the boy the brute sucked the blood in the same way that it would have done had its quarry been a bullock or a deer. I had no difficulty about collecting beaters—the whole village had turned out *en masse* eager to avenge the boy's death, eager to improve the opportunity which presented itself of a sahib ready and willing to slay their formidable oppressor. Other lads had been with the boy that had been killed, so they were questioned in the first place ; they stated that while they were watching the cattle entrusted to their charge they became aware of a tiger sneaking down a *nalah* in the direction of the herd, evidently intent on beef for breakfast. Starting to their feet, they began shouting and throwing stones at the animal, who, as the cattle stampeded on the alarm being given, changed its mind about its prey and charged them home, striking down their young comrade ; they—the unscathed lot—thereupon rushed off and gave the alarm in the village. At this juncture Abba told me that the man-eater was a tigress, and that she had three half-grown cubs with her.

A hurried consultation was now held. The place where the boy had been killed was a small open glade surrounded by scrub jungle, which gradually grew denser as it approached some low hills which lay close by ; it was in a ravine running up into these hills that the tigress was now lying (the villagers, burning for revenge, had not been idle, for during the time that they were awaiting my arrival they had tracked her down there, and had satisfied themselves that she had not passed on beyond), and it was therefore determined that I should take up my position at the top of the ravine, the beaters beating up towards me. Away we went, old Abba, the village *shikari* (or huntsman), my two ladder-bearers with my ladder, and myself, and very shortly I was perched on the third rung of my ladder with my Enfield in

my hand, and Abba above me with my smooth-bore, the rest of my followers seeking refuge in the trees at some little distance behind me. Soon the hills re-echoed with the shouts and yells of the beaters, the roll of their drums, and the discordant blasts of their horns. Presently the long grass in front of me began to wave, and out came a jolly little tiger cub, then a second, and then a third—they did not seem at all put out at the row that was going on behind them, but went past just under me, skylarking and gambolling like so many kittens. There was a slight pause now—I was, though outwardly quite calm, in a state of the wildest excitement—the mother was almost certain to follow her cubs, not much fear of her breaking back, and the beaters were getting nearer and nearer; the grass in front waved once more, and then out came my lady, 'monarch of all (*she*) surveyed,' not caring a straw for any body or anything in the world. She just looked over her shoulder and gave vent to a nasty angry snarl, and then came slouching on with her head hanging down as if it were too heavy for her to carry. I waited for her till she got up level with me, scarce six yards away, and then I let her have the right barrel in the head; down she went on her side, a few convulsive raps with her tail on the ground, very like what a rat does when hit on the head, and the career of the murderess was o'er. 'To make assurance doubly sure' I gave her the other barrel behind the shoulder. No stir, no movement, and then down the ladder we went, old Abba and I. I got hold of the gun the old fellow was carrying as soon as I could and unloaded it, for, to put it mildly, he was excited. '*Chelao, chelao!*' (come on, come on!) he shouted to the beaters, and then he spat solemnly on the ground, and began abusing that tiger. Presently the beaters came up, and it would seem to be vain to attempt to outdo the tide of objurgatory oratory that was poured forth; it *was* outdone, though, later on, near the village, when the women got their turn and let their tongues out *feelingly*. Well! well! the tigress was tied on to my ladder, and with song and music (*tom-toms* and horns), old Abba dancing like a lunatic in front, was carried first to the village for the women and children to see and swear at, and then on to my camp to be skinned.

This tigress was positively known to have killed fourteen human beings—she *may* have killed more—but, contrary to the usual tradition, she was in splendid condition, and the skin, so far as markings went, was one of the finest I have ever seen. It was the necessity of having to provide for so large a family

that had brought her into bad ways, and perhaps the practice that prevails in that part of Mysore of some of the people (the *kurnbas*, or shepherds) exposing their dead on the hillsides may also have had something to do with it. I never had an easier tiger, for the first shot—it hit her just behind the ear—killed her *instantly*; the second bullet was quite superfluous, and was only fired, as I have said before, ‘to make assurance doubly sure.’ I came on her three cubs again about ten days later when beating for a bear, and I am sorry to say that one was *chopped* in the beat, being hit over the head with an axe by one of the beaters. The damp air of the konkan did for the skin of the tigress a short time afterwards. I kept the skull, too, for a while, chiefly on account of the shot, which had smashed it up most wonderfully. I used to keep it on a bracket in my drawing-room, but when I got married my wife objected to so gruesome an ornament, and it was consequently relegated to the back regions, from which it eventually disappeared. *Sic transit gloria mundi!*

III.—A MORNING ON A KONKAN HILL.

A BROILING morning in the broiling month of May, the time between seven and eight. The sun beats down mercilessly on the hill that I am climbing, the burnt-up grass on which affords almost as slippery a foothold, at the angle at which it presents itself, as would so much ice. Fervently I wish for a breath of wind to fan my perspiring brows, that, as I press upwards, ‘lard the lean earth’ generously. Presently the stillness is broken by a sound seldom heard in the Konkan jungles near the sea—the irate, startled cough, namely, of the well-known black visaged *langur* (a species of large monkey). Looking about, I soon discover the performer, seated on the top of a bare teak-tree, evidently a female, as she carries a young one in her arms. She is in a state of violent excitement, and is swearing violently at something concealed from my view. Glad of any excuse for a halt, I throw myself on the ground, and watch for the sequel, as one by one a pack of village dogs come up to pay their attentions to my long-tailed friend. On reaching the tree on which she is seated, they pull up at the foot of it, while in the distance, dark moving objects become visible. These are *Khatkaries*, one of the semi-wild tribes who infest the Konkan hills, and who are the masters of the dogs. Monkey in various disguises would be found in their list of delicacies for the table, a fact of which the

present member of the genus seems to have some inkling, for on their approach she, thinking 'discretion the better part of valour,' betakes herself once more to flight. Carrying her young one with her, and leaping from tree to tree, she rapidly ascends the hill, not touching the ground, and 'the merry chase goes heedless sweeping by' within a few yards of me. I have had a first-rate view of the hunt, for I have gained a point on the hill above the line taken by the harassed animal and her unrelenting pursuers, and have therefore seen everything very clearly. The silence with which the chase is conducted is most striking, both dogs and men are mute, and the quarry also has relapsed into silence since resuming active flight. As I had some *Khatkaries* with me, I questioned them about it all. They told me that no dog single-handed was a match for an ordinary sized *langur*, who could and would tear to pieces very shortly any member of the canine race that might have the temerity to attack it unaided. Three or four dogs were needed to pull down one *langur*, unless, indeed, a man was near enough to come in to help at once with cudgel or axe. Monkeys are very greedily eaten by these wild people. I heard later, when returning, that the baby monkey had been killed, while the elder one had made good her escape, rather to my surprise, I must confess, as I did not think that the mother would have abandoned her young one under any stress of circumstances.

My adventures were not yet at an end, however, for before leaving the hill I heard a sound much resembling that of timber being sawn up. Being the Forest Officer in charge of these forests, I, of course, made in the direction of the sound, stalking as noiselessly as the dry fallen teak leaves would permit. My associates for the time being, *i.e.*, the *Khatkaries*, hung back; 'a fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind,' and they did not at all relish the idea of assisting at the probable capture of a fellow tribesman. On we went cautiously—the excitement was growing intense, when all at once the wild men began pushing to the front quite eagerly. In reply to my queries as to this sudden change, I was told that the suspicious sounds had nothing to do with wood, but were caused by a party of female aborigines hunting for land crabs. Sure enough, we soon came on the dusky Dianas, and after a little parleying, the result of the chase (some two dozen crabs) became my property, their ultimate destination being the Natural History Society's Museum in Bombay. These crabs lie dormant during the dry

months under large stones, and similar places of refuge, emerging only when the rains set in again. The wild people rub such large stones as seem likely places of retreat for their prey with other stones. The crabs underneath mistake the sounds for thunder, and thinking that the rains have set in again they emerge from their retirement, are caught, and are in due time popped into the wild man's cooking pot, thus fulfilling one of the functions at all events for which they were included in Dame Nature's scheme,

CAUGHT IN A BLIZZARD.

By WILF POCKLINGTON.

WELL! well! a wilful man is like a wilful child, and if you must go, I do not suppose anything I can say will alter your determination; but my advice is that you stay until to-morrow, for I don't like the look of those clouds in the north-west.'

The speaker, who had been my host for the last two days, was the owner of a cattle ranch in Kansas, and I had announced my intention of walking ten miles across the prairie to the ranch of a mutual friend, with whom I had lately been staying for some weeks, enjoying the hunting afforded by those comparatively trackless stretches of the Wild West of ten years ago.

Deaf to his advice, however, I shouldered my Winchester and started off, hoping to meet with some antelope, or at least some prairie chickens, as I covered the distance between the two points.

It was late in the fall, and snow had been threatening for some days, and that was the reason for my friend's warning. I (an Englishman) had, of course, heard of the heavy snow of the plains, but had hitherto never experienced what it really meant, and, expecting to cover the distance easily in three hours, had not heeded the warning as seriously as I might have done. I therefore stepped out freely, soon placing several miles between myself and my late host. Once I saw, nearly a mile away, some antelope, a group of seven, running at a sharp pace, with heads up and the wind behind them. I wondered what had scared them, and anathematised my luck in not having them cross nearer, and affording me a shot. As I stood still watching them

I became sensible of a penetrating chilliness suddenly apparent in the air, and every now and again a slight puff of cold wind that made me button up my coat and step out with increasing liveliness in order to keep warm; and away in the north-west appeared a dull, leaden-coloured patch of cloud, that drove over the sky at a great speed, ever spreading as it came, until at last the whole sky was covered with a pall of dirty black, that seemed to sink lower and lower, until the horizon appeared to lay at three miles instead of seven. Then it began to snow—quietly and steadily, with large soft flakes that sifted slowly down, gradually decreasing in size as the wind rose, until it became more like fine dust, that blew in between my cap and collar, and down my neck, and, in half an hour, it seemed as if all the furies were loosed on me. The wind howled and shrieked until its razor-edged blast seemed to go almost through me, carrying the fine, hard, frozen particles against my face until they stung like the lash of a whip, filling my eyes and nostrils, hindering my breathing, and producing a feeling of suffocation.

I looked around for landmarks, but could not see fifty yards off, and, for a moment, my heart seemed grasped by an icy hand. 'Blizzard!' something seemed to whisper in my ears, and that one word for an instant paralysed me, as all that I had ever heard of that devastating scourge of the prairies flashed through my mind. I recalled my self-possession by an effort and looked at my watch. It was two hours since I had left the ranch, and I must be more than half way to my destination, which lay—where? It was in front of me, to the south west, and the wind and blizzard had come from the north-west, on my right hand, but now it was on my left. Had the storm changed its course, or had I turned partly round? With nervous haste I felt for my pocket compass, usually reposing in my right-hand vest pocket, at the end of my watch chain. It was gone. Hesitating a second, I determined to set the storm on my right again, and take my chance.

By this time it was something beyond description. The snow no longer fell in flakes or particles, it fell like an endless fleecy curtain, impenetrable to the eye, and propelled by the terrible wind in a lateral direction, that piled it on the ground in moving drifts, here two feet thick, and there not two inches. Blinded and deafened, I struggled along for over three hours, the time going so quickly that I was astounded when I again

looked at my watch. It began to grow dark, and I feared that night was coming on, and felt the exhaustion and cold fast overcoming me.

Suddenly I plunged into a deeper drift than usual, and encountering some hard substance, I tripped and fell. Rising quickly to my feet, I saw in the half light of the driving storm and dusk an animal about the size of a buffalo, and, firing quickly two shots, both of which struck behind the shoulder, it staggered and fell, half buried in the drift.

I never knew what made me shoot, but suppose it must have been instinctive action, for in such a case sport was forgotten, and the finest herd would have been safe from my gun. It was now quite dark, and I made my way to where the animal lay, with a dim recollection of reading or hearing of an old Indian trick of disembowelling the carcase and creeping inside. Under ordinary surroundings I had always scouted this as a romance, but, chilled through as I was, it presented a realistic side that was new, and, with a grim smile at the idea that I must inevitably freeze to death outside in less than an hour, I drew my hunting knife, and, bleeding the animal at the throat, commenced, in the dark, to remove the entrails from the smallest hole that I could cut, and then I deliberately crawled feet first inside.

It seems incredible to me now, as I look back, that I felt no sensation of disgust, that I experienced no sickening smell of the freshly killed flesh, but simply a grateful and luxurious warmth, to which I crowded down as a child does to its mother, and, like the child, in a few minutes I fell asleep from the reaction of heat and rest following piercing cold, exhaustion, and excitement.

How long I slept I do not know—it seemed but a very short time—when a muffled sound of voices awoke me, and I pushed aside the loose flap of skin, and looked out from my novel house. The snow was fairly level with my eyes, and, remembering the depth of the snow when I had shot the animal, I knew that it must be lying nearly four feet deep on the level, and stretching away far into the distance until it met the clear blue sky was the vast ocean of white foam that had again drowned the world.

Again the voices sounded, behind me, and with some difficulty I crawled out, and perceived, moving to and fro, inspecting every deeper drift and inequality of ground, were some two

dozen men on snow shoes, among whom was my host, Major Markham. For one minute he stood in silent amazement, and I, forgetting what my appearance must be like, called to him, 'Well, what's the matter?'


I shall never forget the expression of his face as he approached me, or my own sensations when, later, I saw myself in a glass. I was simply covered with caked blood—face, hands, and clothes.

It transpired that they had heard my two shots the night before, but never thought of them as coming from my rifle, and, in any case, they dared not venture out into the storm to investigate the meaning of the discharge; also that I must have circled round and round the house after losing my way.

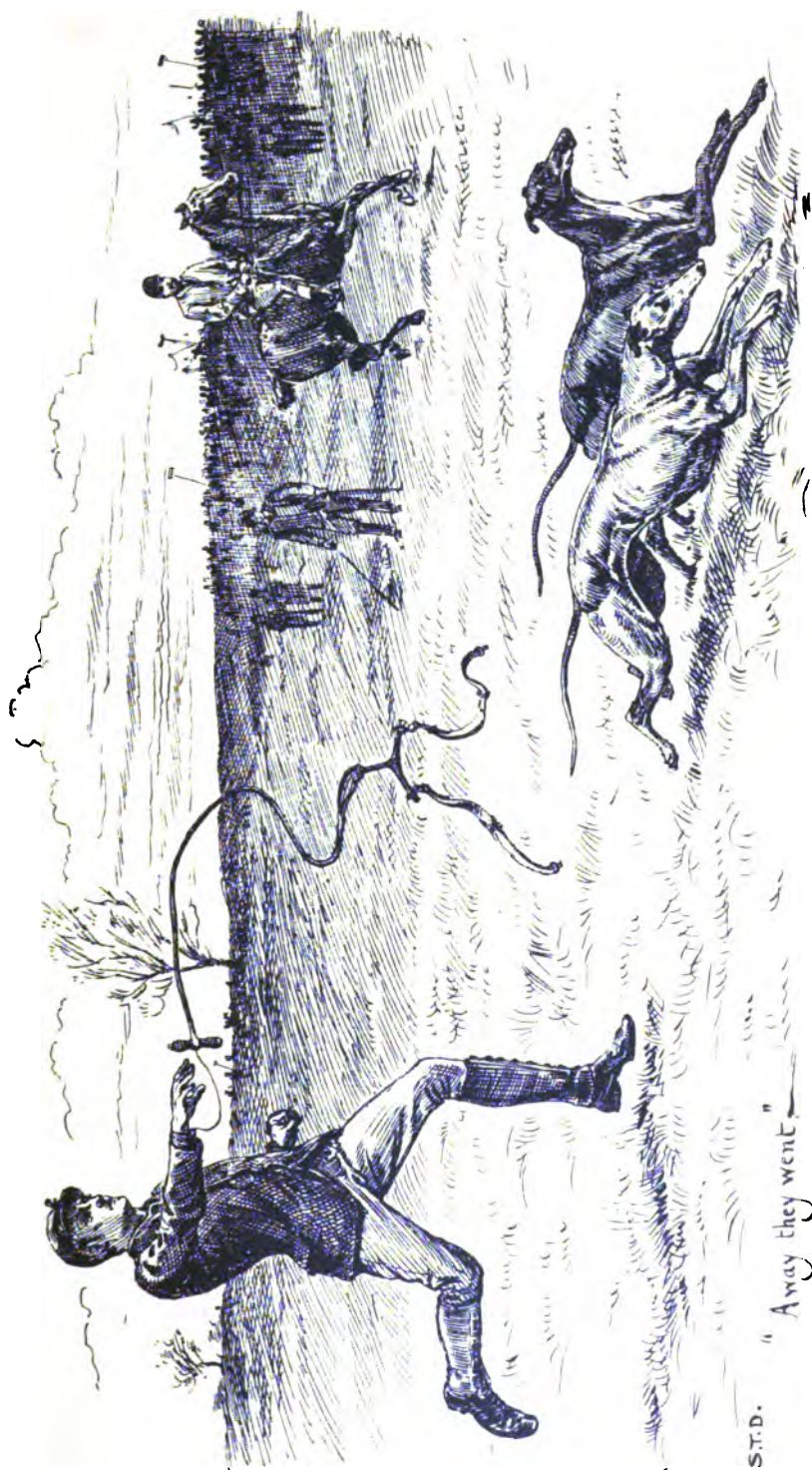
I got considerable praise for the application of an old pioneer trick to modern times, and the horns of my dead acquaintance account for the presence of a pair of cow's horns in a sportsman's museum, for it was a plain domestic cow, and not a buffalo, no 'buffers' having been seen there for fifteen years.

ON THE SCUT.

By SILVER LEASH.

 NCLE BEN lived close to Altcar, *ergo* he was a coursing man to the backbone. He had never hitherto achieved the object of his ambition, however, by getting one of his kennel a run over the famous plain among the exclusive sixty-four, so there was considerable excitement at Hightown Old Moor when at last he got a nomination for Annandale to compete in the 'Derby' of the leash.

Uncle Ben knew a thing or two about greyhounds—he knew how to feed them, and did not forget the red herrings; he also knew whether a likely dog would 'run cunning,' of which he declared no greyhound that ever ran was more innocent than Annandale. The dog was good looking enough, with just the right curve and the fall to the shoulder that enables a dog to hold himself well in hand at any rate of speed, and pick up his hare at the finish, if he has the good fortune to give the *coup-de-grace* to pussy; so with pace and bottom to back up these good



S.T.D. "Away they went!"

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qualities, it looked likely that Annandale might bring home the 'blue ribbon' to the 'Old Moor' Farm.

'But, Uncle,' said I, 'Mr. Barton's Carnation ran clean away from Annandale when you tried them the other day, and she is nominated, so I do not see where your chance comes in.'

'Ah! that was a run up and a kill; but it isn't likely the same thing will happen at Altcar. We've a shot in the locker if it comes to a long course, and Tom Burgess won't slip them at a bad hare if he knows it. Leave it to me, my lad, and if we pull off the cup I'll give you boys a "pony" to make ducks and drakes of.'

The 'boys' were my brother and I, and, on the thaumatrope fallacy, I expended my half of the yet ungrasped guerdon in as many ways as would swallow up three or four times the amount—that is, I expended it in imagination. I bought a second-hand central piece by Purdy for a start, and I don't think I need mention the other *chateaux en Espagne* in which I invested. Suffice it to say that I was an exceedingly interested party in the result of Annandale's performance in the competition for the Waterloo Cup.

On the first day of the meeting he was drawn against a fast bitch little more than a sapling, and would have had his account settled there and then had not Harebell—the sapling in question—run wide at the first turn, and therefore failed to secure even the one point for the wrench. The remainder of the course offered no opportunity for Harebell, gamely as she ran, to neutralise the advantage gained by Annandale in the 'run up.'

'It looks very pretty,' said Uncle Ben, 'and nobody likes it better than I do, boys, to see a dog doing a lot of clever work after the first turn; but five points *are* five points, and they take some clearing off.'

'You had a narrow escape though,' said I, 'if old Joe Martin, of Maghull, knows anything; he says Harebell can run Annandale off his legs, and, if she could only keep her eyes open, would have been at no more than four to one at the Adelphi.'

'Well, she *didn't* keep her eyes open then,' replied Uncle Ben, testily, 'and I believe she has as many eyes as Annandale.'

'Quite right, Uncle,' I rejoined, somewhat sadly, for I began to see the 'pony' vanishing into thin air; so by way of a

'herring,' I proposed that we should inquire whether Carnation was left in.

We soon discovered that Carnation was among the lucky thirty-two that had raised a flag that day, and I was by no means overjoyed at the fact. I thought of Uncle Ben's own words anent the five points, and wondered how he could expect the balance to be turned in Annandale's favour if Carnation gained those five, as I felt sure she would.

'She'll get knocked out, lad, before the finish,' said the old boy, with a chuckle. 'Old Barton doesn't know the trick of getting a dog ready for such a dressing as a Waterloo nominee is in for before he gets anywhere near the finish.'

'All the same,' said I to myself, 'I do not want that sapling to be in the final against Annandale;' but I did not dare to utter my thoughts aloud.

Fortune, however, favoured her as the meeting went on. She got slipped at inferior hares or hares off the second beat, and there was nothing in Lancashire that year so fast up to game and a kill; consequently, without taking much out of herself, she remained 'in,' and, to cut this part of the story short, found herself in the slips with our Annandale on the last day of the meeting.

I shall never forget the excitement of the deciding course. It was no easy task for the slipper to give them a fair start. Hares were plentiful, as they always are on the appanage of the Molyneux; but they did not always get up nicely, and even when they did, though the pair in the slips both sighted, Annandale strained so much harder than Carnation that more than once pussy went free on that score, whilst others owed their escape to the fact that they were not, in the slipper's opinion, calculated to give a sufficiently long course to so redoubtable a brace as were doing their best to dislocate his wrists. Meantime, we boys, and Uncle Ben as well, were on tenterhooks as we paced along the dykes that serve for fences in that part of the county palatine; but at length the cord was pulled, the collars dropped, and the fate of the Waterloo was, barring a tie, beyond the control of even the slipper.

Away they went like two arrows from one bow; but, as I feared, Carnation was first up and turned the hare, at which I involuntarily groaned '*five*,' and Uncle Ben said something else which I haven't been able to find in the dictionary, so I am unable to quote it. Things looked gloomy, but there is one

advantage in such sports as coursing—you are not kept very long in suspense. Two turns, as many wrenches, then Annandale and Carnation were 'on the scut.'

'Thank goodness,' said Uncle Ben; 'now if the hare can last long enough I'll back Annandale to polish off a better than Carnation by long chalks.'

In a second or two afterwards they came to a rise, the nearest approach to a hill you can find in those regions. This gave pussy an advantage, and a cheer arose from the vast concourse as she made for a little spinney on the rise above referred to. I believe that, though as a rule the interest aroused in the breasts of an Altcar throng is confined to the 'points,' there were many who wished that hare 'good speed'—I was one—as she drew away from the two cracks.

For the information of stray readers whose lines have fallen in places where the leash is unknown, I may say that 'on the scut' means the finish of a course, when the quarry zigzags and a good dog holding himself well together, follows as nearly on the correct line as a greyhound can.

Well, they were 'on the scut' then, and a self-satisfied expression stole over Uncle Ben's countenance, which showed me that he thought himself within reasonable distance of victory.

'The judge gives a good deal of credit, my boy,' said he, 'for these points, and that's why I had faith in Annandale for a finish. He may not kill, but he'll behave well on that you may lay your bottom dollar.'

So he did. Carnation was thrown further and further out at each veer, while Annandale seemed almost a part of the hare, so promptly did he answer each motion of the latter. Pussy never reached the haven, for at last our dog not only followed her in the manner admired by all true coursing men, but 'turned' her into Carnation's mouth. The kill followed promptly, for the bitch was clever enough at 'gathering;' but though she scored that point, it was too late, inasmuch as in the meantime we had rubbed off the debit account, and the red flag announced that the cup had fallen to the share of Uncle Ben as owner of Annandale.

'Ah! said he, 'give me a dog that runs well "on the scut" after a long course; and the way to make them do that is to run them always after stout hares. Don't slip a dog you mean to make your mark with on a hare that you start on a farm where there are heaps of rabbits, or, for that matter, where the

hares themselves run too "thick." Your dog may score early, but in good company he'll be very apt to disappoint you when it comes to a finish such as we had to-day.'

I have always borne Uncle Ben's words in mind, and I have carefully preserved that Purdy, the only purchase I found practicable from the achievement of Annandale on the classic plains of the family whose crest is the time-honoured 'Cross-Moleen.'

Speaking of the original home of the Seftons, reminds me of a question I was asked by a *savant* the other day. He remarked that our terms of *venerie* were mostly derived from the French, and inquired why the tables had been turned to such an extent that, barring the one sport of flat racing, we had gained the supremacy in flood, field, and forest, as completely as in colonisation, 'and even the success they have met with in racing,' he added, 'is derived from imitation of English training and importation of English "blood" stock. The horses,' he continued, 'are ridden by jockeys whose names proclaim their origin, and even the stable lads have mostly passed their novitiate in Newmarket. How do you account for it?'

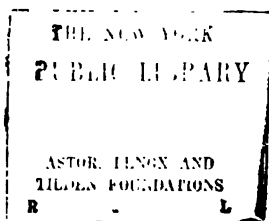
'Very simply,' I replied. 'We acquired the terms you refer to from the Normans, and they were no more Frenchmen than you or I, and when they crossed the Channel they brought their sporting proclivities with them, so sport has become an exotic in "La Belle France."'

I was told of a coursing meeting at Paris where the hares were 'bagmen'—to use a fox-hunting term—and the course an enclosed space on which the cramped and terrified pussies were turned down, with no chance, not even such as they have at High Gosforth (now defunct), Haydock Park, or Plumpton.

'The whole thing as related by that eye-witness was a farce. Coursing should be "open," and pussy allowed to have the same law as "Charley" has in the "countries" of Old England, from the fields where Sir Hildebrand wound his horn in forty-five, to the land where Ella of old disembarked his sea rovers to found the Kingdom of Sussex.'



ST.D. "Turned her into Carnations' mouth."



THE SNARES OF THE FOWLER.

By C. PARKINSON.

IN the short mid-winter days, when all is grey and dull by the Severn side, and hard frosts bind the alluvial plains, innumerable wild fowl ascend the spreading estuary. A glance at the map at once reveals the admirable shelter afforded by the wide river mouth to the incoming birds, driven south by arctic cold, in search of the food necessary for the maintenance of life. On the *basts*, or ridges of sand exposed by the receding tide, thousands of geese seek grit for the proper attrition of the green blades eaten at night on the surrounding meadows, while mallard, teal, and widgeon, disport themselves in the tidal way, and many rarer birds remain for a short season. Skirting the Scandinavian coast, and following the westerly line of flight along the British shores after the passage of the northern ocean, many of these migrants arrive in the poorest condition, with the keel of the breast-bone almost devoid of flesh, and, consequently, eager to seek food in so acceptable a harbour of refuge. Without, the fierce winds and waves ceaselessly contend ; in the protection of the estuary all is comparatively still, and ample means of subsistence abound on every side. Then it is that sportsmen who can brave the elements turn out with punts, sailing boats, and all descriptions of murderous weapons ; the wild-fowl are encompassed in the snare of the fowler in countless numbers, the arrivals each year varying in ratio to the severity of the frost and cold.

At this time, also, the famous Berkeley decoys are in full working order, rendering their quota of birds, which are so artfully obtained. From November to March occasional captures are made, but during the three months in the very depth of winter, the greater proportion of inquisitive ducks are lured to their destruction ; the decoy returns increase according to the degrees of cold. At Slimbridge, some twelve miles S.W. of Gloucester, on the strip of ground lying between the Sharpness Canal and the river, the Berkeley pools lie hidden away in the secluded plantations, in quiet spots where the foot of man seldom falls. There are the old and the new pools, distant from each

other about a mile; the only sounds heard in the vicinity are the cries of the tame call-ducks swimming peacefully in still waters, ready at all times to attract their wild relations. The call-ducks are of three kinds—the pure white, black, and speckled brown varieties being fairly distinct. The true strain, of exceedingly small proportions and beautiful shape—not larger than a teal—is most difficult to obtain, the birds commanding a price of 10s. a pair amongst fanciers. I do not think that they exist in a natural state, the breed having been developed especially for decoy purposes by judicious crossing and selection. As a direct consequence of excessive interbreeding, the best and smallest birds are troublesome to rear. Having been where numbers are hatched annually, I can bear testimony to the fact that fifty per cent. die before the feathers replace the yellow down. Nothing can be more beautiful than the newly born duckling, and nothing certainly is more fragile.

These tame birds at the decoy live on the fat of the land, gobbling up the grain freely scattered by the side of the pipes, and merely quacking now and then, as in duty bound, to the strings of teal or water-fowl by the Severn side. This is but one of the arts employed. The central sheet of water at Slimbridge is entirely open to the skies above, but overgrown at the sides with sheltering reeds, and protected all round by a thick undergrowth of brushwood or the boughs of now leafless trees. The plantations are most jealously guarded, no one being allowed to approach the vicinity of the decoys without the express permission of the noble owner. The new pool is constructed in what is known as the crab-shaped form; that is, the four net-encircled pipes, running in curves from the oval sheet of water, have a fancied resemblance to the carapace and claws of a crab. The second, and older one, has partially fallen into disuse. It is the business of the decoy-man to induce the wild-fowl to enter the comparatively wide opening through which the birds fly with an exciting rush to be hopelessly entangled in the ever narrowing extremity of the net, hidden from sight, until it is too late, by the bend in the pipe. All retreat is cut off by an ingenious device for closing the mouth of the net after the unwary birds have entered therein. Thus everything that can be allured within can be killed at leisure, by simply wringing the necks of the scared captives. Most ducks can dive, but they unfortunately for themselves forget so to do until escape is hopeless. There is a single exception in the dun-diver, which sometimes is

collected enough to use its arts, bobbing deftly beneath the surface of the water at the first moment of danger, to reappear in the middle of the pool. At once it takes wing, seeking the Severn channel and pastures new, far from the haunts of rapacious man—and fowlers in particular.

Passing through the well-stocked pheasant coverts, let us imagine ourselves secreted behind the screens on the bleakest of winter days. Beware how you move, for an incautious step or the snapping of a twig destroys the chances of sport. Each silent spectator, carrying a fragment of smouldering peat, which is said to prevent the keenly sensitive birds scenting the approach of human bipeds, remains hidden from sight. Grain has previously been scattered on the turf at the water's edge, within the entrance to the pipe selected for operations. A peculiar low whistle given by the decoy-man is sufficient to attract the attention of the tame 'call-ducks,' intermixed, it may be, with a flock of beautiful widgeon. Through the crevices the latter may be somewhat narrowly observed; the drake is known at once by the creamy patch on the forehead, the deep brown neck, and pencillings of black on the back and wing-coverts, the breast is chestnut, the abdomen white, and the under tail-coverts deepest black. Contentedly they sail to and fro on the peaceful water, totally unsuspecting of a lurking danger which shall presently overtake them. The decoy-man brings forth his little yellow dog to the screens, and dodging in and out, following the course of the pipe outside the net, this clever animal—specially trained for the purpose—arouses the curiosity of the wild-fowl. By a strange fascination they are impelled to follow. When it is too late the widgeon find themselves driven forward, and snared in the funnel-like net at the end of the pipe, the man showing himself in the rear to drive the birds and let down a net midway to bar retreat. Every duck is then captured, and the dog receives his well-earned reward. *Apropos* of the use of the dog, the manner in which birds and many animals are attracted to other species through curiosity is truly remarkable. In the same way that ducks follow a dog, sheep will surround a fox, poultry a rabbit, and swallows a hawk. Inquisitive birds mob the red-backed shrike in the hedgerows, although thus lured to their destruction. A yellow or reddish-coloured animal appears to offer the greatest attraction. A fox has been known to stalk the wild-fowl when the pipe in the decoy was frozen. Surrounded by an admiring circle of ducks, he grabbed helplessly at his prey,

slipping down each time in the ineffectual attempts. Master Reynard was caught and whipped with a thin cane before being turned loose; but the next night he returned under more favourable conditions, to kill seventeen ducks, which could not resist his wiles.

In a good season upwards of 3000 head of fowl have been taken at the Berkeley decoy-pools, different species predominating at different times. The common teal are amongst the earliest arrivals, staying for a few weeks before continuing their southerly journey, to be closely followed by wild-duck proper, and great flocks of widgeon. From day to day it is quite uncertain what birds will be on the pools. The gadwall (*Anas strepera*, L.); the shoveller (*Spatula clypeata*, L.), with pale blue bar on the wings and curiously flattened bill; the pintail (*Dafila acuta*, L.); the pochard (*Fuligula ferina*, L.); the red-crested pochard (*Fuligula rufina*, Pall.); the tufted-duck (*Fuligula cristata*, Leach), and others have been occasionally taken. Moorhens, landrails, coots, snipe, sand-snipe, and the rarer water-rail, are among the stray birds that find a way into the decoy; more than once a foolish hare has been ensnared. Flocks of geese flying in V-shaped strings are continually passing overhead, but they are far too wary to enter the nets; a wounded grey-lag goose was many years ago found inside.

After the decoy-keeper has effectually wrung the necks of all the captured ducks, an extraordinary sight is witnessed in the muscular contortions of the birds still floundering about and struggling on the snowy ground. That the spinal cord is thoroughly severed, anyone can at once discover for himself by placing a finger on the disjointed neck. Each duck is as dead as mutton, and still the curious reflex action of the muscles continues—perhaps for the space of fifteen minutes after the wringing operation has been performed. The wings flutter to and fro, and the legs attempt to move as in life. I saw one mallard crawl on his leg and wing, in lopsided fashion, fully a dozen yards across the frozen pathway, and yet I am credibly informed that life and sensation are absolutely extinct. In the same manner I have seen a domesticated duck fly across a yard and over a wall eight feet high, after the head has been severed with the sudden blow of a chopper. If memory serves me right, it is likewise recorded in the memoirs of the Sansan family—for three generations executioners in France—that the head of a man who has been guillotined has been observed to gnaw the sides of the

basket into which it fell, so vigorous are the reflex muscular spasms. Many other forcible examples of this strange after-death movement might be enumerated.

The broad estuary lies within a quarter of a mile of the new decoy pool, changing imperceptibly with each recurring tide. The very meadows on which we stand are sedimentary deposits—muddy ooze forming the insecure foundation—slowly accumulated in ancient channels from the districts of Lias cliffs. At the ebb of the tide the existing river-course is found to consist of mud and shifting sandbanks for fully two-thirds of its width. Day by day, and year by year the channel alters its course amid the tortuous ridges; only experienced pilots can here sail in safety. Woe betide the boat that gets stranded on banks exposed to the rush of the flood; over she goes before the advancing bore, and Heaven help those who are thus engulfed; there is small hope of escape with a tide roaring and swirling onwards at a pace of twelve miles an hour. A heavy barge, carried against the piers of the Severn Bridge, a few miles lower down, has been cut clean in half on the strong spring-tides.

On these ridges of sand the geese love to congregate. One wary sentinel gives forth a warning cry at the approach of danger, and a thousand birds rise in the air with a whirr that can be heard half a mile away. The impossibility of gaining a vantage ground for a close observation is a clear indication of their acute sight and hearing; by the aid of field-glasses or a telescope alone can one hope to resolve the specific forms. Those who are familiar with the habits of the winter migrants know, however, that the main flights of geese follow a fairly regular succession in these parts. In October the grey-lag goose (*Anser cinereus*, Meyer) arrives in dense flocks, to be replaced a few weeks later by the white-fronted species (*Anser albifrons*, Scop.) and the pink-footed goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*, Baill.). At Christmas the smaller bean-goose (*Anser segetum*, Gel.) puts in an appearance; it is readily distinguished by a black mark at the tip of the upper orange bill. A specimen shot at Frampton, in January, 1890, measuring twenty-eight inches in the extreme length, was peculiarly difficult to identify, having the decided bill of the bean-goose, with a generally fawn-coloured plumage, and the distinctive markings of the white-fronted species as delineated in Dresser's *Birds of Northern Europe*. I conclude the bird was an intermediate hybrid form. The Brent-goose (*Bernicla brenta*, Pall.), a dark and sombre bird,

enters the Severn estuary in pairs, while a pair of striking black and white Bernicle geese (*Bernicla leucopsis*, *Bechst.*), rare visitors so far south, were shot in February, 1890, as high up the river as Tewkesbury. A doubtful record has been made in the last two years of the lesser white-fronted goose (*Anser erythropus*, *Scop.*) taken on the Severn, in Shropshire.

From time immemorial it has been the custom at Berkeley to drive the geese feeding near the estuary. Each gun is carefully placed under the shelter of the rocky shore, the less fortunate sportsmen having sometimes to wade over his boots through the muddy sediment to reach his station; then the keepers, making a wide circuit, enclose the entire flock of birds previously marked on the low-lying meadows. After waiting for twenty minutes with a second gun at hand, the trumpeting of the geese heralds the approach of a confused mass of birds which, with luck, fly overhead within bare range. In a few moments the rush is over, for wild geese possess considerable speed. It requires a collected marksman to avail himself of the opportunity, and it is quite useless for a man to blaze away at the receding flock—a too common error on these occasions. ‘Don’t shoot at their starns,’ as a friendly keeper remarked.

But there is another mode of procedure which is, perhaps, more likely to prove successful if a man can stand night exposure and hours of solitude in the depth of mid-winter, when the small dykes are frozen hard, and the cutting nor’easter has swept the snow from a patch of meadow, the geese invariably assemble there in search of food in the early dawn. A suitable hedge for shelter is sure to be at hand, and the solitary sportsman who can bide his time is certain to gain an opportunity. Many a poor fisherman by the Severn side thus procures his dinner when the great drives often end with an empty bag; for the plaguey geese seem to know what is up, and rise far out of range as they cross the river with a dozen guns lying in wait beneath the shelving rocks. I have seen flocks swarm down the Flemish coasts in late autumn, also passing inland through the heart of Worcestershire, and I have heard them incessantly at night while rolling at anchor off Beachley, in the Severn, but rarely been within fair range of these most acute birds when sailing. I have known a successful long shot made at bean geese, 250 yards away, with a four-bore, muzzle-loading duck gun, charged with eight drams of powder in each barrel, and shot to correspond. Aim being directed fully fifty feet above

the flock to allow for the fall of the bullets, three birds fell, running hard across the sand, and eventually two only were secured. Lying in the bottom of a flat punt with a huge swivel gun in the bows is, at the best, a poor sport. In my opinion the ducks, widgeon, and smaller birds can be best approached by sailing to and fro in a boat of light draught and rig suitable for estuary work. If men and guns keep out of sight the boat will not frighten the water-fowl. I have passed close to floating teal in a steamer without any one of them rising, and this in a narrow stream.

By some contrary fate the wounded birds generally contrive to fall on the mud or sand. Beyond the danger of sinking through the ooze or insecure quicksands, there is another risk to which men are peculiarly liable in the treacherous Severn estuary. The islets and spurs of sand may be firm enough, and yet highly dangerous on account of the incredible rush of the incoming tide. Intent on his purpose, a man may be—and often has been—taken unawares. He is, perhaps, half a mile distant from the boat, engrossed in the allurements of some golden plovers a head. A rush of water suddenly falls on his startled ears. A broad channel has already formed betwixt himself and the shore, the boat remains fixed on an islet now in mid-channel, and he himself is absolutely surrounded. In ten minutes he may be swept away; however powerful a swimmer, there is no contending against the surging flood. It is a race for dear life, and many a strong man has been rescued from peril by timely assistance from the river side.

Other birds frequent the Severn mouth besides the ducks and geese. Black and white oystercatchers (*Hæmatopus ostralegus*, L.), with red bills and feet, whistle to each other on the mud; the distinctive call is often heard at night. Turnstones (*Streptilas interpres*, L.), especially immature birds, arrive in January. I have a couple of these birds shot from among a flock, both lack the chestnut-coloured feathers on the back, and full distribution of colour. A close examination shows, however, that these young feathers would develop a rich brown tone in a second year. Green plovers or 'spurs' abound, with circling curlews, whimbrel, flights of golden plover, dunlin, ringed dotterel, and a few pigmy curlews. A smew (*Mergus albellus*, L.), a drake in full plumage, was shot as high up the river as Maisemore during the last winter, and I saw the red-breasted merganser (*Mergus serrator*, L.) at least once. Wild swans put in an appearance at odd times, especially in the

neighbourhood of the Steep Holmes Island. The extremely rare crane (*grus communis*, *Becht.*), arriving in January, passed towards Bridgwater to its destruction, instead of ascending the Severn. About once in two years the osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*, *L.*) visits the estuary. In November, 1888, an exhausted female bird flew into a fishing boat off Cardiff, to be duly captured as a great prize. The specimen was stuffed in Cardiff. Last winter another osprey passed up as far as Shrewsbury.

Standing one day at Awre point I examined with glasses a dozen stately herons wading in the shallow stream, watching patiently for some unwary fish, and gleaming silver blue in the sun's rays. The reflection of each one was perfect on the surface of the water, and the crests or plumes waved with every movement of the head. A noble peregrine falcon rested immovable within a hundred yards. It was evidently gorged and disinclined for action after chasing the dunlin; now it stood on an old pile driven deep into the sand, with keen, ferocious eye rivetted on the fish-poachers beyond. Facing the shore, but at a little distance from the bank, the peregrine, erect as a dart, must have measured twenty inches in height. It is a grand bird to watch closely. The throat is white, the breast having faint longitudinal stripes of brown, giving place lower down to white feathers barred horizontally with rich brown at the tips. The upper parts are dark bluish-brown; a dark patch passes beneath the eyes, which are themselves black surrounded with white. The beak is strong, horny, and boldly curved over the mouth; both legs and claws are yellow. The hand of every man is against them, but I believe they still breed in Lundy Island and among the Somersetshire cliffs.

Another rare hawk was seen in the neighbourhood of Gloucester in 1885—the hobby (*Falco subbuteo*, *L.*). The sheldrake or burrow-duck (*Tadorna cornuta*, *Gmel.*), not only frequents the Severn-mouth, but breeds on the sandy coasts not so far away, depositing the eggs either in rabbit-holes or excavations made on its own account. The golden eye (*Clangula glaucion*, *L.*) has to my knowledge been taken once in winter, but neither this duck or the sheldrake appears among the records of the Berkeley decoy, which have been most carefully preserved for upwards of forty years, and which Lord Fitzhardinge has permitted me to inspect.

Sometimes vivacious little dab chicks—the lesser grebe

(*Podiceps fluviatilis*, Tunstall), are diving here and there in the river, and isolated specimens of the great crested grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*, L.) are met with in most years. They arrive in magnificent plumage, with a fringe or ruff of deep chestnut surrounding the head, and breasts of smooth, satin white.

In winter the discordant kittiwakes and numerous gulls assemble in restless flight around the stake nets used in the tidal-way at Beachley Point for the capture of the shoals of sprats. Regularly as the waters ebb these sea-scavengers flock to the uncovered nets. If the fishermen are not on the alert every fish entangled in the meshes will be cleared away by the voracious birds. And if they are disappointed of so choice a meal the hovering birds appear to shriek with rage. Once I have seen the fulmar petrel (*Fulmarus glacialis*, L.) in the estuary, and the graceful river tern (*Sterna fluviatilis*, Naum.) often skims the waters. On the rocks by the Chapel Light, marking the Junction of the Severn and Wye, flocks of redshanks (*Totanus calidris*, L.), greenshanks (*T. Canescens*, *gmel.*), godwits, little stint, and sanderlings, rapidly flit by in due season. Temminck's stint has been recorded within the last three years higher up the river.

Go when you will, in summer or winter-time, there is always bird-life to be studied on the lower Severn, and the ornithologist who compiles a history of the birds of Gloucestershire will find the shores of the estuary his most prolific ground for observation ; and afterwards he must search the ridges of the Cotswold Hills.

It has often struck me as a singular fact that nets are not used in the Severn estuary staked on the tidal sands—as they are seen on the Eastern coasts—for the capture of night-flying birds of passage. In the neighbourhood of Boston, on the flat Lincolnshire shores, where the sandy wastes are covered, or uncovered by the alternating action of the tide, there nets are placed in position. They are made in sections about six feet wide, threaded at the top and bottom by fine cord, the mesh being, it is said, seven inches. The stakes are driven firmly into the mud, and the nets, once in position, are usually left *in situ* for months at a time. Sometimes they are exposed, and sometimes hidden beneath the water. The birds are not caught in daylight, but each morning the fowler makes his rounds to see what wild-fowl have been snared in the

blackness of night, when wintry frosts prevail and the winds are keenest from the Nor' East. And yet, according to a writer in the *Leisure Hour*, the custom is purely a local one, unpractised in other parts. In the Severn estuary there are many reaches of sand eminently suited for the purpose; but, I suppose, the mere lack of habit and custom amongst the fishermen is the sole reason why the stake nets have never been employed for the capture of migrant birds.

Those who are best acquainted with the lower Severn assert that the winter birds do not fall off in quantity, although since the enactment of the ground game laws in 1870 more guns are carried, and the wild-fowl are more disturbed than in former times, to the detriment of the few decoys that remain.

As the Spring advances every bird departs for the far North. Some few species of sea birds stay to breed on Lundy Island, but all the geese and ducks retire from the broad estuary until the hard weather comes again.

SPORT, ANCIENT AND MODERN.

By 'FUSBOS.'

I HAVE long since come to the conclusion that, so far as real enjoyment went, the sportsmen of the past had a long way the best of it as compared with those of the present generation.

Take partridge shooting for instance. There was no walking over bare fields in old days. With the stubble nearly up to your knees, the birds laid there just as well as they did in the turnips.

The *fin de siècle* sportsman of the present day may talk as much as he pleases of the advantages of partridge and grouse driving; how it enables you to kill the old birds off, thereby doing good, &c., to say nothing of the sporting shots you get: much more difficult, don't you know, killing driven birds than when they get up before you.

Granted all that, but is there the same pleasure in waiting in ambush, whilst the birds are being driven to you by an army of beaters, as there is—or rather *was*—in walking over the

country on a fine day into good cover, plenty of birds before you, and, above all, in pleasant company? I say, No.

As regards partridges, too, the argument about the old birds hardly holds good, for one of the things an adept was wont to pride himself on was to single out the parent birds when a covey got up in front of him in September, and kill them. That feat accomplished, the covey would come to hand much better, as may well be imagined. Another pleasure the gunner of to-day is denied—at all events in England—is the shooting over dogs, which, thanks to modern innovations, is almost entirely done away with. The sight of a sportsman with his gun and his brace of pointers pursuing the partridges as of yore would, indeed, be a rarity. Even the luncheon of old days, partaken of under a hedge, and consisting in all probability of a crust of bread and cheese, washed down by a glass of home-brewed, is a thing of the past, and hot dishes and champagne cup are now the order of the day.

Walking the stubble-fields of the present day, as bare as the palm of one's hand, thanks to modern improvements in the way of farming implements, is trying I am quite ready to admit. Under such circumstances, if the day is hot and the gunner is not quite so young as he was, my advice is to sit down and smoke a quiet pipe whilst the keeper and his men do the walking. If you do take it into your head to go with them, take the outside, where, if there is a shot to be had, you will get it; for what more likely place for partridges to be in on a sunny day than under the shade of the hedge?

There are always a lot of wiseacres, only too ready and willing to lift up their voices against the unsportsmanlike fashion of shooting—butchering they call it—tame pheasants. Our own experience, and that I fancy of any one who knows anything at all about shooting, is, that a tame-bred bird, *if allowed to rise* flies every bit as fast, and is consequently quite as difficult to shoot as a wild one.

We should uncommonly like to place one of these benevolent scribes well outside a fir covert, and turn out a few tame-bred pheasants—arrived from town that very morning if he pleases—and see how he gets on when they come sailing over his head *down wind*.

Your *real* sportsman, as the writer understands the word, is a man who, bred and born in the country, and familiar from his cradle with its surroundings, is so far a naturalist that he is

thoroughly familiar with the ways and habits of the birds and beasts he pursues for sport. Wage war persistently with them though he does, he will take no unfair advantage of either, you may depend. This is the class of man who really *enjoys* sport, simply because he refuses to make a toil of a pleasure.

The breed in question, we fear, is getting scarce in the land, a misfortune which, considering the way we live nowadays, is hardly to be wondered at.

Half the men who go out shooting in the present day very possibly have never so much as seen a gun, let alone handled one, until they have arrived at middle age, and shoot either to keep their fat down and enable them to eat their dinners, or because they think it is the correct thing to do. How can such *enjoy* sport? They will tell you they do, but they don't for all that, and would be far happier, if the truth were told, taking their holiday at some seaside resort than tramping the turnip fields after partridges which they can't shoot.

We came across, not long ago, a gamekeeper who, for the time being, was, we verily believe, one of the most unhappy men in England. His master, the owner of a large and very sporting estate, had let a part of it at a highly remunerative figure to a city magnate, who, in his turn, had got four or five friends to share expenses with him, and join him in the field. Not one of them could shoot a little bit; and they committed every sort of atrocity a cockney sportsman could be guilty of, such as affronting the tenants whose fields they roamed, &c. Finally, when the end of the day came, they invariably quarrelled over the division of the spoil.

No wonder the keeper, who was heart and soul in his profession, and had lived nearly all his life in the service of one of the finest sportsmen England could boast of, was for once in a way fairly disgusted.

They were liberal enough with their money, but that was not everything, and the unfortunate keeper, driven to desperation at last, told the agent on the estate, who, being a sportsman, thoroughly appreciated the old servant's grief, that 'he could stand it no longer, blowed if he could, and that either the cockneys must go, or he must!'

Nor is shooting the only sport which has altered very considerably for the worse of late years, hunting having suffered quite as much, if not more, consequent on modern improvements all over the country.

What ought to be done to the fiend in human shape who invented that enemy to man, horse, and hound, barbed wire, it is really hard to say.

As for a remedy, there is absolutely none. It is as cheap as it is nasty, and in these times of agricultural depression, who can blame the farmer who, for economy's sake—we trust not from choice—runs it along the top of his fences?

'Wire, the very name's enough
To turn a man white with *fear*:
You'd scarcely believe me when I say
They must have *barbed* down here.

Barbed wire! Just fancy!—
To ruin a priceless hound,
Or hopelessly cripple a favourite horse
That had always before been sound!'

sings Mr. H. Cumberland Bentley in his lately published volume of songs and verses, in an admirable ballad *à propos* of this enemy to fox-hunting.

Yes; what with pheasant preserving on a large scale, added to barbed wire, fox-hunting in sundry counties in England has a very bad chance given it.

'Where to, now, Jack?' inquired a sportsman one day, addressing the M.F.H., who was his own huntsman, as he and his hounds emerged from a wood which they had just drawn blank.

'Where to?' echoed his friend. 'I'm sure I don't know. There's barbed wire all round Blackberry Wood—can't go *there*. The keeper's just asked me not to draw Belton Grove because they're shooting there to-morrow. It's no use going to Tiltenhanger because there's not a fox in the place. *I think we'd better go home!*'

And the despondent M.F.H.'s reply to his friend is a very fair summary, we regret to say, of the state of the poll in many a county where formerly 'the noble science' flourished to an unlimited extent.

When one takes up one's *Field* and reads therein how one day a fox was shot right in front of the Quorn hounds (what would have been the feelings of Sir Harry Goodricke or Sir Richard Sutton had they read it?); and how on another, a lot of members of a hunt invaded on horseback the covert of a rival pack with whom they were at enmity, just as they were about to draw, making as much noise as possible so as to frighten away

the fox if there was one ; how, on another occasion, the same clique took the rival huntsman's horse away from him by force and locked it up : why then we tremble for the future of the time-honoured sport, and no wonder.

A well-known hunting correspondent expressed his opinion the other day that, Whereas our forefathers offered one another their snuff-boxes when out hunting, sportsmen of to-day proffer cigarettes, a box of which they carry in their saddles.

This is no doubt correct, but, in spite of the many changes in our manners and customs, cigarette-smoking instead of snuff-taking included, it does not appear that the art of riding to hounds has by any means deteriorated ; on the contrary, it is probably better than ever it was. Though good riders are plentiful, however, it is questionable whether there are as many good sportsmen, in the strict sense of the word, as formerly.

DODGING THE WATER-BAILIFF.

By CINQFOIL.

YES, they are a set of poaching scamps down there, but what can I do? I can't keep a man always on the watch.'

'No, and if you did, they would get the better of him now and again.'

The speakers were both enthusiastic fishermen, and seated over their wine after dinner were discussing water poaching in general and the iniquities of the dwellers in a neighbouring village in particular.

'I remember,' continued the latter, 'when I was at school doing the water-bailiff finely. There was a very good salmon river you know, close by, and the upper boys used to fish a great deal and have very good sport ; but old Muggins, as we called him—his name was Brown, the water-bailiff—hated the sight of us about the water, and was always on the watch to catch us up to something ; but for the most part we kept within our rights, and the old fellow could do nothing.

'Well, one day when the water was dead low, I was strolling up the bank with poor Tom Wilson—you remember him—and watching the fish, as it was useless to throw a fly over. We sat

for some time looking at three beauties at the bottom of a deep pool. It was a little bit of a place, and a little rush of water came down into it from another small pool above, which was fed from a pool above and that again by a channel not three feet wide. The main body of the river came down on the farther side of an island.

"I think we could get those chaps with a rogging net," said Tom to me, "if only old Muggins was safely out of the way."

'A rogging net, I should explain, is a small square net about three feet each way with a stout stake on each side of it. It is used for catching eels in a clear stream, the process being for one to stand just below a stone, likely to cover an eel, with his feet wide apart and the net between his legs, the ends of the staves being pressed down to the bottom inside his feet. The other man—for it takes two to work—rocks the stone, when away goes the eel down stream and brings up in the net, which is quickly closed and lifted from the water. It is surprising what a number of eels can be caught in this way by two skillful performers.

'Now Tom and I could work a rogging net as well as most, and many a succulent supper we have had to supplement the school fare, which was none too good. Having decided to make the attempt, we laid our plans with great care and added to ourselves three assistants, one a loafing chap who used to do odd jobs about the school, run errands, roll the cricket ground, and so on. His only task was to sit in the "Spotted Trout" and keep old Muggins talking as long as he could, and make an agreed signal when he came out. We and the other two boys were to come and help—one to stay on the bank and watch for the signal from the "Spotted Trout," the other to help actively in our raid on the fish. We knew the habits of old Muggins to a nicety, and contrived to run across him as we went down to the river with our rogging nets. We stopped and had a gossip and bought a few flies of him, and commenced turning over the stones for eels; he watched us for some time, and then went off, as we knew he would, to the "Spotted Trout" to drink the money which he had got from us.

'We watched him safely into the pub., and got to work at once, by closing the top of the upper pool with a net, and putting one of our party there to drive any fish back. Tom and I then beat the lower pool carefully, prodding up all the holes with long sticks. We soon had the satisfaction of seeing the rush of a fish

upwards and the flick of his tail as the first salmon made his way up the rapid to the upper pool, then a second, and a moment after a third. A shout from the head of the upper pool showed that one had tried to go on but had been turned by the watchful Willie McAuliffe, as cunning but artless-looking a young scamp as ever deserved a caning. In a moment we had the net across the rapid between the upper and lower pools, and while I held it Tom began to beat the upper pool downwards. I thought the fish would never come back; my position standing on two round smooth stones up to my knees in the rushing water was by no means a secure one.

"Look sharp, you chaps, there goes the signal, and old Muggins will be here directly!" This from our scout who had his eye on the "Spotted Trout."

I lifted my eyes for a moment from the water at my feet on hearing the shout, and in an instant was rolling down over the stones, but with my knees close gripped together. My exclamation brought the others, who stood for a second or two laughing at the comic appearance I presented, lying in the shallow water with the net between my knees and a lively fish bouncing and fighting like mad in the net, which I was only just able to keep together.

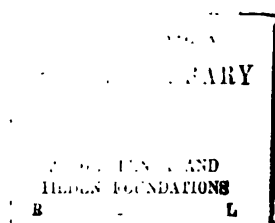
A few moments later they had drawn me ashore, and a few blows with a stone quieted the fish, which was slipped into a rabbit hole just as a warning whistle came from our scout. Tom picked up the net and jumped into the river, and I went to his assistance and was moving a stone in the most harmless manner as old Muggins appeared. McAuliffe and his brother stood on the bank watching us with apparent unconcern, having forgotten the other net which had been left lying half in the water at the head of the upper pool.

"You're no likely to get eels where ye left your tackle!" said old Muggins, looking at the net suspiciously as he brought it along in his hand. "Ye'd better try like they two precious innocents, bless their little hearts!"

Tom and I were working away industriously, and old Muggins sat down close to the rabbit hole in which our booty lay concealed. I could catch the glint of the sun on a silvery scale on the pebbles, where the salmon got his quietus, not a yard from where he sat.

"Your'e vera wat, Muster John," he said to me as we landed with a brace of eels in the net. I explained how I had slipped





on a stone, and we gave him a few eels. The old man sat eyeing us suspiciously till his pipe was smoked out. He saw well enough we had been up to some game, but could not make out what. "Good afternoon, gents!" he said after a bit, as he knocked the ashes out of his pipe, "I must be getting on!"

"Good-bye, Muggins, hope you'll catch all the poachers!" shouted Tom, derisively.

'Tom was a rare good hand at any sport, but he could no more control his tongue than he could fly. The old man looked back muttering something and disappeared over the stile.

'We went on with our fishing for a bit, casting anxious glances round to see which way Muggins had gone. We knew it would not be safe to unearth our treasure yet, but "lock-up" was fast approaching and something must needs be done. We waited as long as we dared and had determined to risk it. We landed, put our nets together, and stood for a moment on the bank looking round. Not a soul could we see, and in another moment the salmon would have been hauled out when my eye caught the glint of the sun upon something far up the hillside where the gorse bushes straggled along the steep bank. I knew it had not been there a moment before, for I had examined those bushes carefully, as being the best shelter for a watcher anywhere round.

'We determined to leave our fish to his fate and try to fetch him another time, so we walked off towards the school, and before long saw old Muggins going along close to the hedge near the bushes. "The old brute had got his spy-glasses on us, but we will be even with him yet, and that fish we will have," was our comment. We walked on holding a hurried counsel of war, which ended in a resolve that McAuliffe and I, whose previous misdeeds had not rendered us liable to any exaggerated penalties should boldly cut lock-up and see what we could do. The consequences would be serious, we knew, but a fish is a fish "for a' that!" Our first step was to get two cloths from our pal the blacksmith, chief importer of tobacco and other contraband for the school. Getting back to the river as fast as we could we crawled down a ditch and there in front of us was old Muggins examining every bush and bit of grass round. He had spotted the scales on the stones where we had killed the fish, and we knew he would be certain to find him in time. McAuliffe had his knife out at once and cut a long strip of turf off the side of the ditch, which he skilfully wrapped up in the cloth and proceed to stalk old Muggins as carefully as he would have done:

a stag. I watched him making his way through the bushes to within twenty yards of the old man just as he was approaching the rabbit earth. Then McAuliffe showed himself stooping down and fumbling with the cloth. Muggins went for him with a wild shout of triumph, and away scudded Master Willie with the cloth carefully in his arms. Muggins was very good on his feet for an old man, but could not catch the smartest runner in the school, who artfully led him along, just letting him gain a little so as to keep alive his hopes of making a capture.

'I watched them until they were fairly out of sight and then whipped out the fish and was off to the school another way as hard as if all the water-bailiffs in the county were at my heels. We had been only just in time, and as it was we both got back to school within twenty minutes of lock-up, having slipped the fish in at a class-room window as we passed. A hundred and fifty lines of the *Odyssey* with accents was not a dear price to pay for an eight pound fish.

'What a supper we had that night in the fifth-form room, and didn't we drink old Muggins's health with three times three, and laugh over McAuliffe's account of the old man's rage as he came panting after him, the youngster keeping just clear of his clutches till he could run no more and stopped dead, when the innocent Master Willie shook out his piece of turf and executing a triumphant and derisive war-dance set off at a jog trot back to school, pursued by the most complicated set of anathemas of which old Muggins was capable, and he was no mean performer.

'The poor old fellow got unmercifully chaffed by the whole school, and never forgave us, keeping a more watchful eye than ever on our movements, whilst thirsting for revenge.'

NOTES ON NOVELTIES.



DAINTY little volume is *Illustrations of Indian Field Sports*, reproduced from coloured engravings after designs by Captain Thomas Williamson of the Bengal Army, and there is little doubt that it will be welcomed by those Indian sportsmen who are unable to obtain the scarce original work published in 1807. Hog-hunting, Tiger and Leopard Shooting, the pursuit of Buffalo, Bear, and Hog-deer, are subjects of the ten illustrations, which are

accompanied by adequate descriptive letterpress. Archibald Constable & Co. are the publishers.

Chapman & Hall have published some very sporting effusions by H. Cumberland Bentley, under the title of *Songs and Verses*, which remind one of the poems of Major Whyte Melville, to whom, in an 'In Memoriam' stanza, the author has dedicated them. Polo, Hunting, Fishing, and Shooting, are in turn the subjects of his theme, and with much humour, tenderness, and experience, are they treated. The illustrations by Finch Mason are admirable. This cheery collection will surely find its way to the library of most sportsmen.

'Purple Heather' is again to the front with *A Few Practical Remarks on Game Shooting and its Accessories*. This will be a useful present to occasional shooters or to beginners in 'Sport,' to whom, as the author puts it, his pages appeal. The publishers are Alexander & Shephard.

Hunting men, whether of the waning or the waxing generation, will peruse with considerable interest *The Reminiscences of that 'Famous Foxhunter,' Thomas Assheton Smith*, from the pen of the late Sir John E. Eardley Wilmot, Bart. Not only was the subject of this volume a foxhunter, but a proficient in most, if not all, manly sports. As an Etonian, we find him fighting a drawn battle with his equally celebrated contemporary, John Musters, and many times afterwards did he prove himself an adept in the pugilistic art; and as we read of his prowess as a gunner, cricketer, ship-builder, or yachtsman, we realise that he was equally skilful. Brightly written, and without a suggestion of dullness, this is a volume which, when once taken up, will be with difficulty laid aside. Sampson Low, Marston, & Co. are the publishers.

Longmans & Co. have again sent forth one of their ever-welcome series of the Badminton Library, and this time their subjects are *Coursing* and *Falconry*; the former treated by Mr. Harding Cox, and the latter by the Hon. Gerald Lascelles, and both are admirably illustrated by John Charlton, R. H. Moore, Lancelot Speed, and G. E. Lodge.

It may readily be conceded that Coursing is the more

popular of the two sports, and, treated as it is by an expert, these pages will supply a perennial source of enjoyment to the rapidly increasing partisans of this fascinating pursuit. Very interesting is that portion which treats of Fullerton, Master McGrath, King Cob, and other celebrated champions of the past, and very instructive also are the chapters devoted to the breeding and training of the greyhound.

Most people will agree with the author of *Falconry*, that the alteration in the character of the country by the almost universal enclosing of the land, accounts for the decline in popularity of this once all-absorbing recreation, and will regret equally with him the very limited extent of country where the sport can now be carried on, especially after having perused his interesting pages.

The Fascinating Miss Lamarche, by C. C. Fernival (A. P. Marsden, late Trischler & Co.) is the title of a thoroughly 'up to date' sporting—or, to speak more accurately, racing—novel, for it deals almost entirely with the national sport, a subject with which the author is evidently quite at home. We come across several old friends in the volume—the long-suffering wife, the guileless young nobleman, the wicked major, the dishonest trainer, and, of course, the designing Jew money-lender, without whom, apparently, no racing novel would be complete; but so freshly and naturally are they treated, that it is quite a pleasure to meet them again. From start to finish the interest never flags; indeed, there is not a dull page in the book. The best advice therefore we can give our readers, is to lose no time in making the acquaintance of *The Fascinating Miss Lamarche*.



FLYING CHILDERS

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FORES'S SPORTING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

FLYING CHILDERS.

By 'PECKWATER.'

NOW we have before us the best bred horse to be found in the stud book. On this point all who profess to have any knowledge of the origin and descent of our racehorses are, wonderful to relate, unanimous. No doubts or qualifications accompany their verdict, nor has any suspicion ever been cast on this famous horse's pedigree.

Flying, or Devonshire, Childers was bred by Mr. Childers, a Devonshire sportsman, in 1715. He was altogether of Eastern lineage, his sire being the Darley Arabian, his dam, Betty Leedes by Careless, out of sister to Leedes, Careless by Spanker, &c. An examination of his pedigree, as given in the *Breeder's Handbook*, will prove the utter absence of that alloy introduced by the mixed blood which is evident in all subsequent tables of descent, and entitle him to be styled the purest bred ancestor of our modern thoroughbreds. Flying Childers was a bay horse, about fifteen hands high, with a blaze and four white feet. Various portraits are to be met with of this horse, differing from each other in many essential characteristics. Some represent him as a well-formed horse, but with a prominent and bony head between the eyes, and for some way down the face. Another painting gives him a very fine head of the Arabian type, with a wide forehead and flat between the eyes, tapering and slightly dished before coming to the muzzle. His eye is fine and full, his back straight, quarters high, shoulders long with very deep back ribs. Then, as to his colour the accounts vary, some making him out to be a light chesnut, others a bay. On

this point, however, we have the evidence of A. Cooper, R.A., who writes to the *Sporting Magazine*, June 24th, 1829, referring to a picture of Childers by Seymour, which he was engaged to copy. He says, 'Childers is there painted a bay horse, fetlock joints white, near foreleg more white, white star on forehead, white nose,——'

Without troubling the reader with full details of Eastern pedigrees, it will be advisable to give a short account of the two imported sires, the Darley and Leedes Arabians, from whom Childers and his descendants derived most benefit. A letter, dated Aleppo, December 21st, 1703, from Mr. Thomas Darley to his brother Richard Darley, of Yorkshire, explains the circumstances under which the Darley Arabian came into their possession. A copy of this appears in the *Sporting Magazine*, November, 1830, as follows :—

'Since your father expects I should send him a stallion, esteem myself happy in a colt I bought a year and half ago with that design, indeed per first opportunity ; he comes four the latter end of March, or beginning of April next ; his colour bay ; and his near foot before, with both his hind feet, have white upon them. He has a blaze down his face, something of the largest ; he is about fifteen hands high, of the most esteemed race among the Arabs, both by sire and dam, and the name of the race is called Maunicha. The only fear I have at present about him is that I shall not be able to get him aboard this war time, though I have the promise of a very good and intimate friend, the Hon. and Rev^d Henry Bridjes, son to the Lord Chandois, who embarks in the *Ipswich*. I design to go to Scanderoon to see him off,' &c.

Calzado à tres ni los vendex ni los dex, is an old Spanish saying, *i.e.*, a horse with three white legs is too good to sell or to give away. These marks it appears belonged to this pure-bred crack, but it is said he only covered a few mares, and it is through his two sons, Flying and Bartletts Childers, that his great worth is made manifest.

The arrival in England of this purely bred Arabian stimulated the sporting instincts of the Yorkshire Squires to acquire other strains of Eastern Blood, and this spirit of emulation, spreading to other parts of the kingdom, contributed more than anything else to secure the improvement that is to be noted in the thoroughbred horse during the first half of the eighteenth century. The Leedes Arabian, as he was styled, must be bracketed as equal with the Darley horse in the results which soon were visible in the quality and speed imparted to the native stock, although these

homebred animals had received for centuries before periodical infusions of Eastern blood.

Mr. Leedes of North Milford, the breeder of Careless, Tartar, &c., who was the owner of the largest stud in Yorkshire, was the importer of this horse. Then, his most noteworthy son was Leedes, whose dam was by Spanker out of a Morocco Barb mare. This mare also produced Charming Jenny (sister to Leedes), whose daughter, Betty Leedes, by Careless, was the dam of the two Childers. Hence it is seen that the credit of having bred these two celebrated horses belongs equally to these two Yorkshire worthies, the importers of the Darley and Leedes Arabians. If the pedigree of Eclipse is traced (it may be found most lucidly drawn out in the *Breeder's Handbook*, or in *Stonehenge's Rural Sports*) it will be found that the direct line from the Darley Arabian is to be traced through Bartletts Childers, who is always given as own brother to Flying, or Devonshire, Childers. But here arises one of those delightful historic doubts which some people rejoice in raising to the discredit of one's best cherished convictions, since it was currently reported by 'one who knew' that Betty Leedes, the dam of Childers, produced only one foal that grew up to maturity, its own brother having died soon after birth—a mischievous invention no doubt of some wiseacre eager to display his special information, which, however, has obtained no credit with those who have had the patience to establish our records of the English Turf. It is then through Bartletts Childers, whom we will not doubt was own brother to our hero, that the blood of the Darley Arabian descends to us, for Flying Childers is not represented in the male line, but depends chiefly on the daughters of Snap, his grandson, whose descendants, when mated with the stock of Herod, also a great grandson of Childers, occupy most prominent positions in our best pedigrees.

As to the performances of Flying Childers on the turf, the accounts are somewhat conflicting. It is reported that he was never beaten, and that his speed was such as had never been equalled. His most remarkable exploit was achieved when he carried 9st. 2lbs. over the Round Course at Newmarket (3 miles, 4 furlongs, 93) in 6 minutes, 40 seconds, which is as nearly as possible 14 seconds a furlong, the highest rate at which the Derby course has ever been covered in these days with a stone less weight, and not half the distance.

But in conflict with this record we find this, so called, authentic account, published in 1829, and not afterwards contradicted :—

'Flying Childers never started but at Newmarket, and there ran only two matches in public. He received, however, three forfeits, viz, from Speedwell, Stripling, Bobsey, and Lonsdall mare.

'(1.) 1721, Ap. 26. Duke of Devonshire's Childers, rising 6 yrs. old, beat Duke of Bolton's Speedwell, 8st. 5lbs. each. 4 miles, 50ogs., h. ft.

'(2.) Oct. 9. recd. forfeit from Speedwell, 8st. 5lbs. each. 100ogs., h. ft.

'(3.) Oct. 22nd, beat Lord Drogheda's Chanter, 12 yrs. old. 6 miles, 10st. each. 100ogs. h. ft.

'(4.) 1723. Ap. 3, recd. forfeit from Duke of Bridgwater's Lonsdall mare. 9st. each, 4 miles. 30ogs. h. ft.

'(5.) Received forfeit from Lord Godolphin's Bobsey, winner of two King's Plates. 8st. each, 4 miles.

In the race first alluded to Childers is reported to have beaten Almanzor and Brown Betty, but neither of these names figure in the record which the *Sporting Magazine* gives as authentic. So, as is usual at that period, this report of the performances of the crack of his day must be received with reservation. Still, taking for granted that Childers, when six years' old, carrying 9st. 2lbs., did cover the Round Course at Newmarket in the time stated, at the rate of $14\frac{1}{2}$ seconds per furlong, this performance, according to Stonehenge, has been equalled, aye, and surpassed by horses of more modern days. Among other instances he cites the performance of Sir Tatton Sykes, who covered the St. Leger Course in 3 minutes, 16 seconds, or at the rate of $13\frac{1}{2}$ seconds per furlong. But another, and more conclusive, example is afforded in 1854, when West Australian beat Kingston by a head at Ascot, doing the distance, 2 miles, 4 furlongs, in 4 minutes, 27 seconds, at the rate of $13\frac{1}{2}$ seconds per furlong. So if Childers were allowed a year for the extra mile, and 2lbs. over the weight carried by Kingston, he was surpassed by this horse by 1 second per furlong, and by West Australian at the usual allowance for age. It must be also remembered that horses of the last century were seldom raced until they were five or six years old, and suffered but slightly from the wear and tear which falls to the lot of the high mettled racer nowadays.

That we have been breeding of late more for speed than

endurance is beyond question, still there are plenty of thoroughbred horses who can cover the $4\frac{1}{4}$ miles over Aintree at a speed and under weights which it is doubtful whether horses of the stamp of Childers would have been equal to, for it has been proved conclusively that however good a little one may be, he is no match for a really good big one.

County races were, we find, promoted by County Hunt Clubs during the first half of the last century, and race meetings were held at Exeter, Salisbury, Leicester, Chester, and York, besides those held at Newmarket. Queen Anne herself was a most liberal supporter of the Turf, having a large breeding stud at Hampton Court, and a numerous string of horses in training.

The last meeting at which her Majesty's horses ran was in 1714 at the York Races, held over the Clifton and Rawcliff Ings. Her Majesty's Gold Cup of 100 gs. for 6yr. old horses; 4 mile heats, 12st. each, was won by Mr. Childers' Duchess (R. Heseltine) 1, 2, 2,* 1; Mr. Pierson's Foxhunter (S. Jefferson) 2, 1, 1,* 2 second; four others started.

A plate of 40*l.* for aged horses, 11st. each; 4 mile heats, was won by Her Majesty's b. h. Star, 4, 3, 1, 1, beating seven others.

Among the patrons of racing from 1709 to 1750 we find the Duke of Devonshire, with Childers and other horses; the Dukes of Hamilton and Rutland, Lord Chesterfield, Sir Richard Grosvenor, Lord Howe, Lord Manners (whose mare, Venus, ran the first dead heat on record, in a match against Lord Halifax's Red Robin, *six miles*, for 100*l.* a side); also Lord Lonsdale, Sir W. Lowther, Sir John Astley, Mr. Bowes, Mr. Colton, Mr. Chetwynd, Mr. Greville, Mr. Wynn, and others, whose descendants have inherited the love of sport and are now staunch supporters of the Turf. One of the cleverest and most charming ladies of her generation declared: 'If I were to begin life again I would go on the turf to get friends. They seem to me the only people who really hold close together. I don't know why—it may be that each knows something that might hang the other, but the effect is delightful and most peculiar.' Perhaps so, still we fear the bonds would soon be loosened were turf secrets to be entrusted to fair ladies' keeping.

* The third heat was declared void, as the Jockeys had been guilty of foul riding, and had fought on horseback on their return to scale, so the heat was ordered to be run again, and a lawsuit ensued.

GLIMPSES OF THE CHASE.

IRELAND A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

By 'TRIVIATOR.'



OX-HUNTING has, like Racing, Shooting, and even Dancing, had its phases and fashions ever since it became a National sport, and we may be pretty sure that though we of the guild and fraternity of *fin de siècle* fox-hunters make it our boast that as the 'heirs of all the ages' we have brought the royal sport to the acme of perfection, every contemporary phase was the best adapted to the manners, customs, and requirements of the period; and that, grotesque and absurd as some of the practices of our forbears appear to us now, many of our improvements and requirements and sublimations of sport would afford them in turn many a hearty laugh. After all, if sport be the desideratum, whatever makes for that end in the opinion of its votaries, must be deemed successful, and if real war—of which, according to Somerville and his pupil John Jorrocks, Fox-hunting is the image—was a comparatively innocuous affair in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, when contrasted with the deadly issues of modern scientific slaughter, it attained its aim as effectually as the present system, though more slowly and tentatively.

Indeed, in a few points, we have not improved upon ancestral form, as, for instance, in the sociable side of the chase, and the consequent *camaraderie* produced among fox-hunters. The Pytchley reunions, as we learn from the best statistics, now occasionally muster seven hundred mounted men and women, not to speak of the 'mixed multitude' who pursue on wheels, or the regiment of runners. Sociability would be impossible in such a crowd of all sorts and conditions of manhood and womanhood, where the preliminary parade has some features in common with Pall Mall and Piccadilly in the season, and so long as the canons of the chase are faithfully observed, no one is too particular as to 'who's who,' though all are supposed to have learnt 'what's what.' Indeed, so far as we can gather from the side lights of literature and the fine arts, sociability was the keynote of Fox-hunting towards the close of the last century and the commencement of the present. Shakespeare limns for

us a chivalrous prince declaring on the eve of an international battle that—

‘The man who this day sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother, be he ne’er so vile
This day shall gentle his condition.’

So in the great internecine struggle between the slavery and anti-slavery States of America, whenever the German soldiers who had espoused the Northern side met together in one of the provincial capitals, their challenge to their comrades on furlough was ever on these lines—‘You fight mit Siegel and you drink mit me,’ varied according to circumstance and commands. Similarly did our sociable sires insist that those who shared together the perils of pursuit and rejoiced in its raptures should hold sporting symposia together, and run their runs over again under the inspiring influences of Sneyd’s claret and potations of poteen that had never seen the gauger’s eye. Indeed, so backward and behindhand in means of inter-communication was the country, that it was absolutely necessary for the maintenance of the chase that hospitality should be as open-handed and universal as we now find it in some of our colonies, and we learn that to these sporting oases men were wont to come from long distances, and take the country as they found it, thinking more of the sociable side of the pastime, perhaps, than of the mere riding element; otherwise it would be hard to imagine that sportsmen with due regard to their own necks, or their hunters’ knees, should have picked out such happy grounds for themselves as Brayhead, Killiney, and bits of Wicklow, but for the fact that a few sporting squires and noblemen cordially welcomed the devotees of Diana, and that Fox-hunting and good fellowship went hand in hand, a condition of things of which we get pleasant glimpses in the song of the Kilruddery Hunt, dedicated, we presume, to the Lord of Kilruddery, the Earl of Meath, otherwise a good part of the vicinity would seem to the fastidious fox-hunter about as tempting as the Rocky Ridges of Cintra, near Lisbon, where the woods probably hold many foxes. Glimpses of this pleasant brotherhood of the chase might, nay, may still be seen at Wentworth-Woodhouse, the Yorkshire home of the Fitzwilliam family, where for a certain number of days absolutely open house is kept for the pilgrims of pursuit; and they might have been seen on even a larger scale at Thomastown,

the residence of that hospitably minded squire, Mr. Matthews, who kept open house at his seat in Tipperary, and among the inducements for venatic visitors to come and taste his cheer, actually maintained three packs of hounds, namely, buckhounds, foxhounds, and harehounds, for his guests, mounting them besides if they had not brought their hunters with them. Of course such institutions could only be maintained where society was more or less of a close corporation, and when railways did not inject into all accessible meets hordes of hunting men and women, of whom nobody knew anything save that they affected in their well groomed persons 'the properties' of the chase, made up in most orthodox style and pattern.

In another respect we must give the palm to the arrangements of our ancestors, for their fields were very small and homogeneous, made up of sportsmen who were proud of the prowess of their hounds, and did not press the hounds unduly, or ride on top of them in the modern fashion. When Melton became, in the first half of the century, a Mecca for nomadic Nimrods, we hear through Parson Louth, the laureate of the Leicestershire pastures, that a favourite meet would bring out a couple of hundred cavaliers, more or less. Thus at Billesdon Coplow—

'Two hundred such sportsmen ne'er were seen at a burst,
Each resolv'd to be there, each resolv'd to be first.'

Happy the huntsman, now-a-days, who has only two hundred men and horses thundering in his wake! Perhaps a score would have represented a large meet in the days we write of, a number ample for sociability, but comparatively harmless for mischief on days when scent was not supremely serving, as well as being more amenable to the Master's directions.

It should also be placed to the credit of these sportsmen of the olden time that they were no Sybarites, and went through a great amount of what we might term hardship to compass their ends and aims. Many of us have read of the Cockney who had himself called at an unwontedly early hour, and reaching Euston Station, in his eagerness to be in time to catch the morning mail to Blisworth, where his hunters were located, got into a wrong carriage by mistake, and was so overcome by his exertions that he went fast asleep, and missed his train and his hunt, having been roused from his day dreams by a porter, whose duty it was to examine the carriages prior to their starting. In

the days we write of there were no such luxurious and far-reaching covert-hacks as trains, and the distances cantering hacks covered would astonish pursuers of the present day, thirty miles being no unknown journey to a meet, while that meet was always fixed at an early hour, so that foxes might be found on the run before they had returned to their earth, after their noctivagous raids. And here we may refer to a favourite trysting place of the Ormonde and King's County pack, one of the oldest hunting corporations in Ireland, and closely identified with the Rossmore family, namely, 'Nanny Moran's Rock, at break of day.'

Now, anything more abhorrent to the taste and ideas of a Nimrod of the last decade of the nineteenth century than a long ride in the dark, to a gaunt rock, whose only merit was that it was planted in the heart of a fine, wild grass country, where wild OLD foxes abounded, can hardly be conceived, and we may be quite sure that if a modern M.F.H. encouraged such peep-o'-day pursuit, his subscriptions and his fields of followers would dwindle disastrously. At the commencement of the century, however, many were found not only willing but zealous to keep tryst and time there; proving that 'The labour we delight in physicks pain;' and the hunting songs of the day refer to the indebtedness of sportsmen to the lady they called 'Luna,' who favoured their early fox forays with her gracious beams, being, according to the mythology of Greece, none other than the Diana of the day, Patroness of pursuit, though at night she sometimes lent her light to 'the minions of the moon.'

In point of fact, these matitudinal musters of our forefathers were not unlike the cub-hunting fixtures of the present day, which are designed for the education of hounds and foxes alike, and which would lose to a great extent their *raison d'être*, if they were more popular and fashionable. It is the substantive of the last adjective that is simply 'smothering' sport in some parts of England, and that is compelling masters of hounds to resort to all sorts of strange devices and ruses, in the interests of their hounds and subscribers, such as foregoing the advertising of their fixtures in the public prints, and holding their rendez-vous at unpleasantly ante-meridian hours. No difficulty of this kind ever presented itself at the commencement of the century in either England or Ireland, and, indeed, in the latter island it has never or only rarely been felt as yet, and the fields there are infinitely less 'mixed' than in England, as every one knows

every one, or something about him, or her, and sporting strangers are rarely seen in the field, and often a hundred is a good large field in any part of the Green Isle; two is redundant, and extra numbers are considered bewildering, and rarely occur save occasionally at the Spring Sessions of the Ward Union Stag hounds, on a few Saturdays in Kildare, and when the Meath hounds make their venue within riding distance of Dublin. And in these cases the inconvenience does not last very long, for in addition to the absence of gates, dear to the *dilletanti* sportsmen, and the certainty of the proximate presence of a few formidable fences, the master of foxhounds invariably reduces the redundancy of riders by drawing away from towns and cities, and generally in the direction of the kennels, from which at starting he may be separated by an interval of thirty miles, a not infrequent occurrence in royal Meath. The rarity of railways, and the infrequency of trains, seems to point to the absence of any congestion of the chase for many years to come in the 'distressful country,' and up to the present time there has been hardly any ground for a grumble, seeing that all sportsmen who come out to hunt have to contribute at least half-a-crown to the expenses of the pack, and fifteen or sixteen pounds (the take sometimes at a fashionable fixture) is a welcome 'rate in aid' to the exchequer of the chase. When Ireland becomes really rich, as well as 'great, glorious and free,' possibly hunting crowds will become a nuisance as in England; but that Milesian millennium has not been even approached yet; though the prophetic voice of Curran foretold its ultimate advent, for when a wealthy tobacconist of Dublin asked him for a legend to put under his newly acquired arms on the panel of his carriage, the witty Master of the Rolls suggested '*Quid rides*' (why do you laugh?), and the *double entendre* will suggest itself at once. Now '*Quid*' rode in his chariot or phæton, but no doubt '*Quid's*' sons would all hunt with 'the Wards,' 'the Meaths,' or the Kildares. And here let me state what I saw last season—a sporting railway contractor going by train to an opening meet of his favourite pack. He would not miss the function, but neither could he waste an early hour, so his secretary sat next him in the carriage and took down in short-hand the dictation of the railway king. How such a proceeding would have amazed old-time fox-hunters! 'A deck of cards' in a post-chaise they could well understand, but a series of letters! Never! Indeed, if that jade Report speaks truly, some of the greatest of that

fox-hunting fraternity were poor hands at either writing or dictating letters (if that time-saving process obtained then). For instance, the great Giles Eyre—

‘ Who thought nothing at all
Of a six-foot wall.’

on hearing from a brother sportsman of a genius who could knock off twenty letters at a sitting, exclaimed, ‘Its all very well you’re telling me such a yarn, but show me the man.’ Yet no doubt—

‘ The same Giles Eyre,
Would make him stare,
If he had him with the Blazers.’

The mention of that last pack, ‘the Blazers’—so called probably because its members were eminent in the use of the saw-handled family-pistols, at a time when ‘Did he blaze?’ and ‘Will he blaze?’ were almost the first questions asked about a young man of position ‘debutting’ into society—puts me in mind of another phase of Foxhunting in ‘old Ireland’ (so called in contradistinction to modern or new Ireland), and that was its *peripatetic nature*, for if there was a fair, hostelry, or even a modest ‘pub.’ in the centre of a hunting district, ‘the Blazers’ would take it for a term, and scour the whole country round. I have seen one or two small cribs, many, many miles from the kennels, which they were said to occupy periodically. Sir Josiah Barrington tells us in his amusing way how a number of Queen’s County sportsmen occupied a small crib of this sort during a frost, having first put down a hogshead of claret, killed a bullock, procured musicians, and got a number of game cocks together. The first night when full—‘*Veteris Bacchi pinguisque farina*’—they were laid out on the floor with their martial cloaks around them, but as their heads abutted on a newly plastered wall they became by morning *fixtures*; *imbedded*, or *inheaded*, in the wall, and had to be cut out of it!’

Possibly the style of the chase in Ireland early in the century will be best illustrated by an account of ‘a desperate foxchase,’ which was accounted worthy of a place in the *Irish Racing Calendar* of its year, a calendar which also contains records of cockfighting and the rules of cocking:—

‘On the 4th of December last Colonel Eyre’s foxhounds had one of the most desperate runs ever recorded, of one hour and fifty minutes—desperate from its length, desperate from the pace kept up, and desperate from the dreadful storm that raged for nearly the last hour, and

in the very teeth of which Reynard ran; with the exception of one short check the chase was maintained with unabated fury all through. To choose a leap was to be thrown out. At half-past eight o'clock in the morning they drew over the Old Earth at Coolaghgoran for the spotted fox. Tony, the huntsman, knowing well his abilities from former runs, matched his chasehounds the day before, and fed them early. He calls this pack the *light infantry*, to distinguish them from the slow, heavy draft that were lately sent from England. I was on the Earth a little after eight; 'twas rising ground, and as the dawn broke, 'twas cheery to behold the foxhunters, faithful to their hours, approaching from distant directions, and as they all closed to the point of destination, the pack 'in all its beauty's pride' appeared on the brow of the hill—

“Oh, what a charming scene :
When all around was gay, men, horses, dogs,
And in each cheerful countenance was seen,
Fresh blooming health and never fading joy.”

The taking his drag from the Earth was brilliant beyond common fortune, with a train which runs off in a blaze, they hardly touched it till they were out of sight. Madman, that unerring finder, proclaimed the joyful tidings, each foxhound gave credit to the welcome information, and they went away in a crash; it was a perfect tumult in Mr. Newstead's garden, there the villain was found, and we went off at his brush—

“Where are your disappointments, wrongs, vexations, sickness,
cares ?

All, all are fled, and with the panting winds lag far behind.”

'In skirting a small covert in the first mile we divided on a fresh fox; it was a moment of importance: nothing but prompt, vigorous, and general exertions could repair the misfortune: it was decisive, and we now faced the Commons of Carney; broad and deep was the Bound's drain, but what can stop foxhunters? The line had been maintained by five couples of hounds; they crossed the road, and finding themselves on the extensive sod of the Common, they began to go 'the pace.' A scene now presented itself which none but a foxhunter could appreciate, for its beauty was not discernible to the common and inexperienced eye. At this period the chase became a complete *split*; the hounds, which had changed and had now from different directions gained the Commons, could not venture to run in on the five couple without decidedly losing ground, and to maintain it instinct directed them to run on credit, and flanking the five couple the whole pack formed a chain of upwards of 200 yards abreast across the Commons, but as the chain varied through the hollows and windings of this beautiful surface, the hounds on the wings in turns took up the line and maintained their stations, as the others had done, so well was this pack matched. Here we crossed walls that on common occasions would

have been serious obstacles. The second huntsman on a young one, following Lord Rossmore, called out, "What is on the other side, my Lord?" "I am, thank God," was the answer. We now disappeared from the Commons of Carney, and at this time the pack was hunting so greedily that you would think every dog was hitting like an arrow. We now passed by Carrigorm for the woods of Peterfield, in the teeth of the most desperate storm I ever witnessed of rain, hail, and wind. Distress was now evident in the Field, for notwithstanding the violence of the gale, "the pace" was maintained; this was the most desperate part of the chase, and as the foxhounds approached the covert, I thought they had got wings: the rain beat violently, with difficulty we could hold our bridles, the boughs gave way to the storm. The *Light Infantry* were flying at him, and *the crash was dreadful*. The earths in Peterfield were open, but Reynard scorned the advantage, and gallantly broke amain. He now made for the River Shannon,

"Where will the chase lead us bewildered?"

Some object afterwards changed his direction, and away with him to Clapior. He crossed the great Drain of the Lough, and here we left young Burton Persse ("who had come all the way from Galloway to enjoy a regular cold bath.") He went down tail foremost, and "no blame to him." There was no time for ceremony, but Tony, who knew the depth of *the Bath*, took his leave of him, roaring out "I'll never see your sweet face again" "By ——" says the Colonel, "you were never more mistaken; never saw him more *regularly* at home in my life. He's used to these things, man!" And truth requires me to state that he joined us again, and before and after *the Bath* he rode in a capital place, and many a mile he ran and away by the old Castle of Arcrony, famous in the annals of hunting, and all over its beautiful grounds, and over the great Bound's drain of Coolaghgoran again, for poor Reynard had now cast a forlorn look towards home at last. There was now a disposition to give him his life, but what could we do? Old Driver was at his brush; His Majesty's Guards could not have saved him. Thus ended a chase during which were traversed about twenty-five Irish miles (making thirty English) of the fairest portion of Lower Ormond. In running in Messrs. Fitzgibbon and Henry Westenra took a neat sporting leap. A gentleman of jockey weight, who rode well thro' the chase, wishing no doubt to show us the length of his neck, *craned at it*, swore it was the ugliest place in Europe, and that a flock of sheep might be regularly hid in it. There was a very numerous field at finding. During this most desperate fox-chase, George Jackson rode as usual with the hounds, as did Lord Rossmore, Colonel Eyre, Messrs. Fitzgibbon, Henry Westenra, Richard Faulkener, and Burton Persse all through.'

I have copied the account verbatim, but I cannot help thinking that *second huntsman* should be second horseman—or whip.

There was no harder man to hounds in Meath than the present Lord Rossmore, grandson of the hero of this tale, till he hurt his leg, and the late Burton Persse, who for some thirty seasons was Master of 'the Blazers,' was a grandson of the 'Knight of the Bath' referred to here. So it seems old Horace was a good judge, and that '*Fortes creantur fortibus et bonis.*'

POLO UP TO DATE.

By CUTHBERT BRADLEY.

LADIES, allow me to introduce to you the new mounted game, in which you can take part without the dangers attending on polo, with every opportunity for the most bewitching summer costume in the saddle. 'For goodness' sake, my dear Mr. Editor, don't put such ideas into the ladies' heads! I have a wife and three daughters at home who were intended by Nature for boys. You cannot really understand womankind, or you would not talk about anything new; they'll go for it, whether it's a new face, a new bonnet, or what not, and before the week is out I shall not have a pony in the stable without a sore back. It is bad enough for them to go out hunting. Why, this season I stood at a hand-gate by Melton Spinney, and positively counted no less than thirty-nine ladies in the field. Now, when I was a boy——'

'My dear sir, that was so long ago that it is not interesting, and you are distinctly such a distance behind the times that you must excuse my interrupting you. The ladies have only been waiting to see polo fairly established before they take part in the game. Up to the present the selfish lords of creation have had the field all to themselves, and in each successive season play has become more fast and furious, as is but natural when men are not restrained and influenced by the presence of ladies.'

Keen are the fair sex on all sports where riding is an essential point, and that rather tiresome old lady, Mrs. Grundy, has been heard more than once to remark that she does not know what we are coming to, for when she was a girl she never went careering across country, it was not considered proper. This is true enough, for forty or fifty years ago there were very few

adventurous ladies who went near hounds, for the cumbrous habit of that day, besides being a great source of danger to the wearer, made riding across country totally impracticable. That ladies form so large a percentage of every hunting field is entirely due to the invention of the short safety skirts. What a wonderful pitch of excellence these garments have reached! The scantiness and simplicity of some skirts has won for them in Leicestershire the name of the fig leaf, for, like unto Eve of old, the wearer carries a separate apron to wear when dismounted. However careless the ladies may have become as to riding-dress in Rotten Row, the garb of the hunting field was never smarter or more business-like, and not a button or crease is tolerated out of its place. We should not like to go back to the good old times when ladies did not hunt, the charm of their presence has done much to improve the tone and customs of the hunting field, and to-day the best half of the sport is the social intercourse that it affords. We could never understand why a love of the chase should be supposed to necessitate the abandonment of the refining advantages of female society, or why a man who seeks for healthful exercise and elevating sensations amidst the vales, downs, and woodlands of beautiful England, should be more predisposed to hard drinking and coarse pleasures than my Lord Puss-in-Boots, who devotes his time to tea and scandal. The good old times were not all good, and we are mostly better members of society since beauty has exercised her sweet influence over our sport by sharing our pleasures and dangers.

What is polo coming to? is the question that bothers all those who wish to see the game flourish and go forward, and we venture to predict that the ladies will solve the problem for us by taking an active, instead of a passive, interest in the game. As played now, the game is a fine pastime and training for the young bloods of a cavalry regiment, but for civilians, fathers of families, and anybody riding over twelve stone, in whose manly breast is planted the love of the royal game, his chances of play become every season more remote, for he is out-classed and out-paced. The time has therefore undoubtedly arrived when ladies may give a new life and a new interest to the game, and regulate its too rapid development.

The heads of the army and the home authorities have already shaken their heads at it; the pace and the expenditure are too hot to last, for, where once a couple of cobby cantering ponies were sufficient, now at least three miniature racehorses

have to be found, with speed only a turn slower than greased lightning. Yet no finer game could be imagined to test the riding abilities, judgment, and nerve of a young soldier. If the game were forced upon him as a competitive examination for soldierly qualities, great would be the outcry that too severe a test were imposed. But it is characteristic of an Englishman that he goes through it from his inbred love of sports and games, and we candidly admit that we should like to see a balance placed to his credit by the Commander-in-Chief as an encouragement, for it is an old and true saying that Waterloo was won on our playing-fields.

No, I am afraid that it is not always the dashing young officer who can ride hard and keep his head whilst a Balaclava-like *melle* is going on around, and with steady hand and eye hit the ball in the right direction, that comes first on the promotion list, alas! too often the book in breeches, of inferior physique and impaired eyesight, secures the plums that red tapeism has to offer. Every one, who saw the play of last season, admired the dash and pluck of that brilliant soldier 'Number One.' What a man he would make to lead a cavalry charge we thought, as we watched his tactics and the way he hustled the opposing 'back,' a man nearly double his own weight. His ponies took some riding, I admit, for they were hot-headed pulling brutes that very few other men could handle, but he had no other chances of getting speedy animals at a reasonable figure. He obtained, however, more fun out of his post than most who play Number One generally do, for, like the fox terrier, what he lacked in strength he gained in artifice, and with a spur in his pony's near-side flank, by head and elbow he hustled his opponent like a billy-goat, and generally had the best of it in a ride out. Turning quicker than his opponent, a stone or two less in weight stood him in good stead, and slipping his man, he would get on to the ball and be away with it at racing pace. You should have seen him in the pavilion dressing-room afterwards, black and blue all the way down his right side from riding off, and a game leg with an ossified splint that only stood the severe test of a bumping game by the aid of bandages and a knee cap.

A modified form of polo, briefly described as rounders on horseback, will be welcomed by many who want a summer game and love knocking a ball about, and the new mounted game, styled *Jeu Monté*, the invention of Mr. George Sheriff of Wanguin, New Zealand, cannot fail to become popular in this

country. It was first mentioned in the pages of *Land and Water* towards the end of last year by Dooker, who never allows anything of polo interest to escape his notice. The game is very popular in Wanguin and New Zealand, and may safely be commended to the attention of Hurlingham, Ranelagh, and polo clubs in general, for a decided gain will be made by the addition of lady competitors.

Let me describe how we inaugurated Jeu Monté in the provinces. It was at the end of the hunting season, a period of slackness for those who are residents in a hunting country, and cannot fly away to 'fresh fields and pastures new' like our birds of passage. We were a large family party at Bushey Hall, within a ride of Melton, and the glories and freshness of the early Spring tempted one to live out of doors, but alas! there was nothing in the way of sport, for the hunt chases finished off our season until cub-hunting time comes round again. Young Binks had come on a visit to his cousins at the Hall, and brought with him a bundle of polo sticks and a wonderful account of the new game. The five girls at once gave him their support, though the two boy cousins hoped he was not going to cut up the young grass, and threw cold water on the idea.

'Now,' said Binks, 'one of you girls help me to find the best bit of old turf on the lordship: it must be level and grazed pretty close so that the ball can travel.'

'Well you wont beat the cricket field, grazed by the sheep and lambs, though I daresay the governor will make out we are robbing the wool off the sheep's backs, for he thinks so much of his grass,' was the general opinion of the girls, but after due inspection a nice piece of ground was found, without damaging the best turf.

Then, with the help of a line, a lawn tennis marker, and two of the girls, Binks described a huge circle with a circumference of four hundred yards. At every hundred yards on this circumference a red flag was placed, and twenty-five feet past each red flag was placed a white one, so as to make four goals on the edge of the circle. The ground was now ready, and presented a very sporting appearance, set off, as it was, by the eight flags which gently fluttered in the breeze, much to the astonishment of the old white pensioner pony, who went stepping round the paddock with head and tail erect, looking ten years younger.

As soon as the two boys came on to the ground, after the girls had done all the work, and saw the flags flying, and the inviting looking turf with its magic white circle, they caught the fever of the game and seized the bundle of polo sticks to get first pick of a weapon.

The next important matter was to test the strength of the stable, and see how the hacks 'framed' for the game. The hunters had been turned away for the summer, so that the stables were comparatively empty, with only three or four hacks and a harness horse, and the strappers and helpers filled up their time in the garden and hayfield.

'Here you are,' said Miss Lucy, showing the way round the stable, 'my young mare will do for one I should think, she's as long as a waggon, but a good hack, and it takes a lot to put her about. I don't suppose she will notice a polo stick.'

'She'll do,' said Binks. 'Of course anything over fourteen hands is a disadvantage, because you must have a longer stick to play with, and that is more trying to the wrist.'

'Well, we'll have the saddle put on her at once, and I'll ride her,' said Miss Lucy. 'It matters nothing how I dress, I suppose?'

'But it does though!' said Binks. 'Something between a tennis and a riding get up; however, I can safely leave that to you.'

'Here are the rest of the stud,' said the other four girls, who had got into their grey tweed safety skirts, with white blouses, open jackets, straw hats, and high boots, as fetching a get up as you need well wish to see, admirably set off by pretty faces.

The grooms were bustling about with the side saddles, keen as mustard to further sport, for if the man is worthy of the name of a stable man he hates the inactivity of the summer.

'The two ponies have been tried at polo, so I know they will do, and the harness cob carries a saddle very well; then we can send down to the farm for the shepherd pony, that will make five; and that old grey pensioner pony out at grass, that's six. Where can we get two more from, Francis?' said Miss Lucy, who managed everybody.

'I don't exactly know, Miss, unless Bengimin the donkey would do at a pinch,' replied the old groom.

'No, Francis, he's the king of slows. You would never find out whether you were walking or riding on him.'

'Well, what is Mr. Binks to ride?' was the next question.

'Oh! I've provided for that,' said Binks. 'I interviewed the family butcher this morning, and he's going to let me have his black cob for the afternoon; he'll carry me I know.'

'You will have to watch him, sir,' said Francis, the groom. 'I know he's said his prayers a time or two; his old fore legs are about used up.'

'Well, that is the lot; we shall manage I think,' said Miss Lucy, 'so let's have a look at the two ponies who have played polo, they will be the best mounts.'

'Please Miss, the young gents has took the two ponies out a half-hour ago, and is a practising them in the orchard,' said Francis. And sure enough Archie and Bertie had been hard at it for the last half hour, so that the ponies were lathering freely and two polo sticks had been broken.

'Look here,' they said to Binks, 'we two will play you and the five girls.' They were as fierce as tigers now that they had warmed to the game. But Binks, by a little manœuvring, suggested that two of the girls should ride the two ponies, who were the handiest mounts, and that the boys should get up on something newer to the game which required more riding and squeezing up to the ball.

The game may be played with eight aside, though four do equally as well, and one of the four goals is made 'home,' whilst the other three, as in rounders, are points of grace, where a player may stop if a complete circle cannot be made. The two sides were soon arranged, one team to wear red belts, the other blue, and the following were the players, who were about equally matched as regards horse-flesh, which is, of course, an important point to consider. As the captain of the fielding side is the only dismounted player, the butcher's cob, a handy animal, had to do double duty for the two captains:

THE REDS.

Mr. Binks (captain), the butcher's cob.

Miss Lucy, riding the young mare.

Miss Louisa, riding the old polo pony.

Miss Edith, riding the old pensioner pony.

THE BLUES.

Mr. Archie (captain), the butcher's cob.

Mr. Bertie, riding the harness cob.

Miss Mary, riding the old polo pony.

Miss Ellen, riding the shepherd pony.

The Blues won the first toss for innings, and the four promptly retired into the home goal, as in rounders. Binks

being captain of his side, which had to field, was on foot in the centre of the circle, and placed his three fielders out fifty yards in front of the home goal, where he thought the ball would be hit. Each of the fielders was armed with a light polo stick to hit the ball back to their captain near the home goal, so that he may bounce it into the home den, and put any of the opposing side out if they are anywhere between the flag goals. The ball is rather larger than a tennis ball, and quite light, so that no damage can be done in the event of its hitting one of the players.

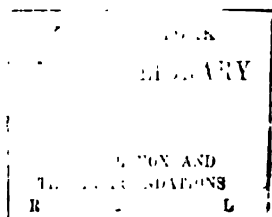
The parson, with a book of the rules, undertook the duties of umpire, and blew his whistle to start the game. Binks placed the ball about ten yards in front of the home goal, and Miss Mary, cantering out of goal on the polo pony, showed by the way she hit the ball that it was not the first time she had handled a polo stick. Then, wheeling round, after throwing down the stick, she started off round the circle, reaching the second flag goal, when the warning voice of her captain told her to stop, as the ball had been fielded up. Miss Lucy it was who met the ball on the hop, and with steady hand and eye sent it spinning back to Binks, who was a fairly smart field. In scoring, each flag goal reached in safety counts two points, whilst accomplishing the complete circle of the course without stopping counts ten. So that Miss Mary made a start by scoring four points for her side. The rule was made, that in the event of any player being put out, fifteen points would buy them in again, whilst four rounders were necessary to buy a whole side in.

Master Archie, on the butcher's cob, was the second to hit for his side, and rode out with a dash, but the old cob snorted and jumped just at the critical moment, and he missed his shot. Two tries are allowed, and the second attempt sent the ball spinning, for the harder you ride at a ball to hit it the greater the impetus you can give it, though there is no rule to debar you from standing over the ball to strike. It was hard luck that the ball was stopped by hitting the quarters of one of the fielders' ponies; the old pensioner, setting him kicking in indignation at the supposed insult; consequently, as the ball was quickly in the hands of the red captain, the blue captain's run was spoiled, and he only scored four points.

Master Bertie was the next hitter out on the harness cob, who took a lot of squeezing up to the ball, and, being what is



Fielding the ball.



termed a bird-eyed or short-sighted pony, he never saw the ball until a stride away from it, then he stuck his toes in and spoiled what might have been a brilliant shot. Away Master Bertie rode with both spurs in the old cob's flanks, but the sight of the second flag was too much for him, and collaring his bit he bolted out of the course, so that Master Bertie was promptly put out by the red captain bouncing the ball in the goal.

Miss Ellen, on the shepherd pony, was the last to hit for her side, and she decided to taking a sitting shot at the ball as the old pony was blind on the off-side, and the hit was a good one. Away she went, plodding round the circle, coaxing along the old pony with a ground-ash plant, whilst Miss Lucy and Miss Louisa did their best to retrieve the ball, but the long-backed young mare getting across it and turning awkward, it was not returned to the red captain's hands as quickly as he hoped, consequently, amidst much cheering, Miss Ellen completed the circle, and scored ten points. Scoring a rounder entitled her to hit again, but the second try was not so successful, for she only placed two more points to the score, which stood at twenty points for the first round of the blue team, fifteen points being lost in buying one of their side in again.

A change was now made, and the red team had their innings, whilst the blues were fielders. The red captain was unlucky, and hit his ball badly, only just scrambling home in time to the first flag goal.

Miss Lucy proved a hitter, and rattled off a rounder to her side, and Miss Louisa rode at the ball as though she were going to clear the Melton Brook, and there was a buzz of 'Oh's!' as the ball went spinning nearly out of sight. A rounder was easily scored for this brilliant hit, and if the gallop round had not put the pony so much on his mettle that he became a handful, she would have scored a point or two more.

Then came Miss Edith's turn on the pensioner, and to make sure, she stood over the ball, and hit right well, but nothing would induce the old pony to start or leave the other ponies in the home goal, therefore the blue captain promptly put her out.

Miss Lucy and Miss Louisa then followed on their innings, as they had each scored a rounder, and between them added six more points to the score, so that the reds scored twenty-eight points in all for their first innings, losing fifteen points to buy one of their side in again.

In this way the game went on merrily, the servants and a

gallery of villagers thoroughly enjoying the novel and pretty sight, besides catching the spirit and excitement of the game.

Most of the fielding was carried on inside the circle, but that is, of course, a point that must depend upon the strength and prowess of the hitters. Play was in no way distressing or harmful to the players or the ponies, and the only danger that might creep in would be that of the fielders getting in the way of the hitters whilst galloping round. But a stringent rule, that the hitter must always be given way to, and can claim a foul if in any way crossed or hindered, which would incur a penalty of ten points if allowed, we found met the case admirably. That the game is possible with a scratch lot of ponies may be seen from the foregoing description, but with trained polo ponies and players it must be still more successful, and there is just sufficient skill and pace necessary to make the game exhilarating. We anticipate the *Jeu Monté* will 'catch on' this Summer wherever there is a polo club throughout the country, and the presence of lady competitors will give a new charm to the polo field.

JACK HALDAN'S DERBY.

By RICHARD RUSSELL.

'Do I sleep, do I dream?
Do I wonder and doubt?
Are things what they seem?
Or, are shadows about?'—BRET HARTE.

JACK, at one time, was a bright fellow enough, but somehow things had gone wrong, and he found himself drifting from bad to worse.

One day Jack conceived a brilliant idea which he imagined would most assuredly lead him on to the high road to fortune. He had often in previous years endeavoured to back the winner of the Derby and had always failed. He had also known other men fail in the same attempt. Hence he concluded that it was not an easy matter to pick out the winner of the Derby. Jack's brilliant idea was this: instead of backing one horse to win, he decided to reverse the order of things, and bet against one horse only.

'Bet against the favourite,' said Jack in his cogitations, whenever an opportunity offers; a horse can have no greater

chance of winning because you lay the odds against him, instead of backing him.' This may sound rather foolish, but it is really not more so than are most systems.

Jack went to work accordingly, and in his own expressive language, 'peppered' the favourite right and left.

He wondered why this brilliant idea had not been worked out before. 'It only requires confidence and pluck,' thought Jack; and to do him but bare justice, it must be acknowledged that he displayed a vast amount of confidence and boldness in his proceedings, up to the very last moment before the race.

He went down to Epsom, and saw the favourite win easily, and then a change came over the spirit of his dream, and he was dumbfounded.

He could not at first realize the fact, but by slow degrees the truth made itself manifest to him, the dismal truth, that by his own folly he was a ruined man. He rushed from the betting ring to the refreshment bar, and sought oblivion from his own thoughts at the bottom of a champagne glass. The champagne, so he fancied, actually made him thirsty, therefore he drank a whole bottle of claret. The afternoon was wet and chilly, and the claret lay cold within him, so he poured glass after glass of port wine down his throat, for the purpose of warming the claret. The port seemed to lie heavy, therefore, to put matters right, he swallowed many tumblers of brandy and hot water.

He now imagined that he felt more comfortable, therefore he decided to turn his back on Epsom. On his journey to London he began to ruminate, and concluded that things would sometimes go wrong with the very best of men. The favourite winning had upset his calculation, and he was completely stranded, and how to get afloat once more he could not tell.

He felt afraid to face his wife, because, as regarded his betting transactions, he had deceived her from the very first. His wife's mother, too, had come to stay at his house, 'and she,' thought Jack, 'also smells a rat. Confound her!'

He found his way home, tired out, weary in mind and spirit. He managed to open the street door with his latch key, and with unsteady gait shuffled into the parlour, and threw himself into an easy chair, with his back turned to the window. There was no light in the room, except that which came through the window, from a street lamp outside. The Venetian blinds were only partly drawn down, and the lamp sent flickering and fitful

shadows over Jack's head on to the parlour wall. Jack intently watched the shadows, thinking what queer, grotesque, and fantastic shapes, shadows could sometimes assume.

These shadows afforded Jack an infinite amount of amusement. He settled himself comfortably in the chair, his head leaning against the back, and his eyes watching the strange forms chasing each other on the wall opposite where he sat.

'I would sell myself to the devil, to be free once more, to owe no man a shilling,' cried Jack aloud, as he watched the shadows.

They now grew more fantastic and fitful than ever, and one shadow in particular kept dancing and pirouetting about the room so perseveringly, until at last Jack began to wonder whether shadows ever became tired. He was not in the least surprised when he observed this restless shadow plump down on to the seat of the chair opposite the one on which he was himself sitting.

The light that came into the room was so uncertain that he could barely distinguish the lineaments of the shadow, but it continued, though in a spasmodic sort of manner, to remain in the same chair. Of that he was certain.

'Hang you,' cried Jack to the shadow, 'sit still, can't you?'

'I am still,' was the quick response, 'as still as stagnant ditch water.'

'Shadows,' thought he, 'can frame words into lies as well as human beings.'

'That's a nasty smell,' said Jack, sniffing the air, 'and not at all unlike the fumes of sulphur.'

'Yes,' said the shadow, 'I generally take some sulphur with me, go where I will. It's healthy. A rare disinfectant, you know.'

'Hang you, and the disinfectant, too,' cried Jack, savagely. 'Clear out!'

'No;' answered the shadow. 'You summoned me, just now, and here I am.'

'Then you are the ——,' but Jack hesitated to utter the word.

'Exactly so,' said the shadow. 'I am.'

'Can you free me from all my debts?' asked Jack eagerly.

'Yes,' replied the shadow.

'The price?' demanded Jack.

'Yourself and one other,' was the sharp response.

'The terms?' cried Jack tremulously.

'You will be allowed to run the allotted course of your life, and then you will revert to me. For a long time past you have

been coming to me, as you are well aware. The other one I must have at once,' said the shadow.

The shadow now poured handfuls of sovereigns upon the table, until a pile of glittering gold, such as Jack had neither seen nor dreamed of before, lay within his reach.

'I'll do it,' cried Jack, rising with outstretched hand.

'Hold!' cried the shadow.

Jack fell back into his chair, scared.

'Let there be no unseemly haste,' said the shadow, sternly. 'Take time to consider, the bargain once made cannot be annulled. The word, once spoken, cannot be recalled. When you are mine, all chance of repentance is past. We never indulge in such weaknesses. I accept you yourself, and grant you ample time to name the other one.'

'Why not,' communed Jack, within himself, 'let him have my heaviest creditor, and so save that much money? Not a bad idea.'

'I should certainly like a little time to consider,' said Jack to the shadow. 'I have lots of enemies—creditors, I mean.'

'Suppose,' suggested the shadow, 'we walk out together and see them. They need not see us; that I can manage, and then you will be able to make a proper choice.'

'Not a bad idea,' thought Jack, as he took his hat and stick off the table, and followed the shadow into the street.

It now appeared to Jack as if he and the shadow were travelling through space at terrific speed. Presently the shadow nudged him somewhat roughly, for the purpose of attracting his attention. Jack looked round, and was surprised to find himself and the shadow in a deep and narrow lane, overgrown by high trees whose branches interlaced. It was the dusk of a summer's evening, and the dense foliage above made the lane quite dark beneath the trees.

'Can you see anything?' asked the shadow, mockingly.

'How the deuce can a fellow see in the dark?' retorted Jack, brusquely.

The shadow rubbed its hands together, and the friction emitted sparks, which threw a luminous glare into the lane.

'What do you see now?'

'Lovers, by Jove!' replied Jack with glee.

'Can you see their faces?'

'How can one see their faces, when their backs are turned towards one, you fool?' cried Jack, rudely.

'You'll see their faces soon enough, so don't be impatient,' replied the shadow, sneeringly.

The lovers turned, and Jack beheld the features of his own wife, and the young fellow whom she had slighted for Jack's sake.

'Harry Melford, and my own wife, by Jove!' cried Jack.

'Am I to have Harry Melford, then, and so complete our bargain?' asked the shadow.

'I shall go raving mad,' shouted Jack Haldan.

'Don't do that,' said the shadow, 'it might hasten your death, and really, I am in no hurry to take possession.'

'Look at the lovers again. Would you like to hear what they are saying?'

'Yes,' replied Jack, in a hoarse voice.

'Oh, Harry!' said Jack's wife, 'the mistake was mine. I listened to the advice of foolish persons, instead of the dictates of my own heart. Haldan is a worthless scamp, and I the most miserable and unhappy woman, in the wide world.'

Harry Melford now wiped the tears from Jack's wife's eyes, and gently kissed her lips.

'Shall we say Harry Melford?' again asked the shadow.

'No,' cried Jack, in a hollow voice. 'Take me away, you demon!'

And now all was darkness, and for a brief period of time Jack imagined that he was floating on mighty waves of air.

When light came again, he discovered that the shadow had conducted him, still unseen, into a gilded and sumptuously furnished room, resplendent with glittering chandeliers. In the room were two men, and two women. The latter were voluptuously handsome, and elegantly dressed. One wore a thick gold bracelet, studded with diamonds, round her left wrist, and Jack observed the prismatic hues glitter as the rays from the chandeliers fell on the precious stones.

It was a supper party, and the constant popping of champagne corks reminded Jack of a *feu de joie*. The merry jest and joyous laugh reigned supreme. Jack never in all his life had seen four persons happier. His wonderment rendered him nearly speechless.

'Do you know them?' asked the shadow.

'I know them,' cried Jack bitterly, 'and the wine they are drinking is Roederer's, or I'm an Esquimaux, and it cost me six pounds per dozen. By Jove! how it sparkles, and its pale pink colour glistens in the light. I'd like to thrust my head into a huge

goblet filled with it ; and that bracelet on Dolly's arm cost me a cool hundred and fifty only six months ago last Derby day !'

'That man,' said the shadow, 'once called you friend.'

'I know that, you fool, well enough,' cried Jack savagely. 'I raised him from the very mire. I introduced him here ; he stuck to me like a leech, the hungry bloodsucker !'

'The man whom we saw just now in the lane,' said the shadow, 'takes your wife, this one takes your mistress ; which is to be mine ?'

'You devil !' shouted Jack, 'do you take me for a stone ?'

'I am not a sentimental man at all,' answered the shadow, 'and never indulge in anything so foolish as feeling. I am all plain matter of fact, and have merely called on you to carry out a very simple matter of business, which you yourself proposed. Am I to have the captain or the danseuse ?'

'Neither ! confound you !' cried Jack.

All was dark again, and it seemed to Jack that he and the shadow were again travelling through space at a most prodigious rate. At one moment he imagined they were ascending, as everything appeared light and buoyant. After that a sickening and wearying sensation struck his heart, and then he fancied that he and the shadow were rapidly descending.

Then matters became a little clearer. He was in a large room, with the attendant shadow by his side. Jack knew the place at once. It was a large room in a betting club, and men were hurrying to and fro with small books and long slips of paper in their hands, and gold and bank notes freely passed from one to another.

'Why,' whispered Jack, tremulously, 'it's settling day !'

'Yes,' answered the relentless shadow, 'and here comes the big bookmaker, to whom you owe thousands.'

Jack's blood ran cold within his veins, and he trembled and shivered.

'I see,' cried the shadow, delightedly, 'the big bookmaker is mine.'

'Hush,' whispered Jack, 'I said not so. I will take time to consider.'

A deep scheme now entered into Jack's head. A scheme by which he hoped to cheat both the shadow and the bookmaker.

'Before I give the shadow that which is due to him, I must get the total amount of my liabilities from him. Directly I hold the money he may have the bookmaker. Then my debt to the

latter becomes null and void, because, in sporting transactions it is not customary to pay the representatives of a dead creditor.' Such were the thoughts that floated through Jack's mind.

If he could manage to swindle the devil and the bookmaker combined, he certainly would be a clever fellow.

Jack closed his eyes and slept. After a brief space of time the shadow nudged him, and he awoke.

'Why, this is my own house!' cried Jack in astonishment.

'What do you see?' asked the shadow.

'See,' roared Jack, 'see that old hag, Mrs. Barnard, my wife's mother, ransacking my drawers and boxes, and now her old cat's head is buried amongst my papers. Oh! death and the devil, this is more than human nature can endure!'

'But,' said the shadow, 'she has a right, she is your mother-in-law.'

'Why tell me that?' hissed Jack, fiercely, 'don't I already know it?'

'Say the word,' cried the shadow, 'is it to be the old woman—am I to have your mother-in-law, and so clinch the bargain?'

'Yes;,' shouted Jack, 'ten thousand million times, yes!'

The shadow vanished suddenly. Jack fell forward, a loud groan escaping his lips as his head came in contact with the edge of the parlour fender. The blow was a severe one, his forehead being cut to the bone, leaving a gash three inches long, from which the blood flowed in a stream. He endeavoured to rise from the floor, but floundered again and again, and in his frantic efforts, knocked over the table, several chairs, and a whatnot laden with ornamental knick-knacks, all of which came down with a loud crash.

The noise was heard by Mrs. Barnard and her son, the latter having arrived at Jack's house that afternoon. They rushed into the room, and by the faint light given by the street-lamp just managed to discern Jack floundering amongst the *débris* on the floor.

The lady screamed, and Jack then recognised her.

'Oh! oh!' he shouted, 'Old Mother Barnard, I have given the devil his due!'

He could say no more, as he became delirious.

Tom Barnard, Jack's wife's brother, was a strong young fellow, but it required all his strength to hold and keep Jack from doing further mischief.

By sheer strength, Tom Barnard carried Jack into an empty room at the back, where he lay huddled up in one corner. Every

movable article was taken away, so Jack had naught but the bare walls and empty floor for his company.

Tom held him fast, whilst Mrs. Barnard bathed and dressed his forehead.

A doctor was sent for, and he pronounced Jack to be in a dangerous state.

The doctor coolly diagnosed Jack's ailment thus :—

Stage one : mad drunk. Stage two: delirium tremens. Stage three: erysipelas. Stage four: death.

Jack Haldan had proved himself to be an inveterate gambler, and an irreclaimable debauchee.

His wife had run away from him the day previous to his interview with the shadow, and, in accordance with a preconcerted plan, Mrs. Barnard and her son Tom were left to look after Jack.

The doomed man had a lucid interval before his death, during which he related to the doctor all that passed between him and the shadow, every particular of which he devoutly believed.

'Has the old woman gone yet?' inquired Jack of the doctor.

'What old woman do you mean?' asked the doctor.

'Mrs. Barnard, to be sure,' replied Jack; 'is she dead yet?'

'No,' answered the doctor, 'nor is she likely to die.'

'She'll not last long,' rejoined Jack, placing implicit faith in the word of the shadow.

The fact is that Mrs. Barnard remained in the house, and saw that Jack was carefully nursed during his illness, but neither the doctor's skill, nor the lady's careful nursing availed to save his life. The erysipelas flew to his brain, and then Jack Haldan departed to the land of shadows.

Mrs. Barnard is alive, and Jack's wife that was, still a young and pretty woman, is now Mrs. Harry Melford.

ODDS v. EVENS.

(A WRINKLE FOR CAPTAINS.)

By L. B. W.



ALL wielders of willow know what it will take
 A downright good cricketing captain to make.
 Full knowledge he needs of each man in his team,
 Which players can get a good grip on the seam,
 The 'teazers' send down with a 'Nottingham spin,'
 Make stands at the wickets when 'rots' have set in.

Supposing opponents a long stand should make,
 He'll know the best changes that long stand to break;
 This goes without saying, but here's something new,
 On men who can captain a cricketing crew,
 With notions original; men who aspire
 'Gainst odds to pull matches clean out of the fire.
 We'd one at Long Bennington—Anthony Low—
 The very best captain I've happened to know;
 We've players no end who at College and school
 Have well learnt their lesson, but learnt it by rule.
 Our Anthony Low was a man of the kind,
 Who bring forth ideas at need from their mind;
 I'll never forget how he managed one day
 When we had engaged with Cold Marston to play.
 Of cricketing talent we'd some of the cream,
 But they had enlisted a man in their team
 Who, save he should 'sky one,' and fall to a catch,
 Was good 'off his bat' to win the whole match.
 His name was Jem Naylor: we hadn't a hope
 A bowler we'd find with this 'Scotton' to cope;
 His left elbow forward, his bat came so square,
 To get past his willow the chances were rare.
 But Anthony Low said he cared not for that,
 He'd win, though Jem Naylor might 'carry his bat.'
 'I know him, and if my opinion you seek,
 I think he could stand to the end of the week;
 But Jemmy's the *head* and the ten are 'a *tail*,'
 The plan I've been working out scarcely can fail;
 Each over we'll manage he gets but one ball,
 In some he'll be lucky to get one at all.'
 'How's that?' 'Well, you know on the Bennington ground
 The ditch by the roadside is reckoned a bound;
 By feeding him freely with balls "on the spot"
 Some six feet in front of his pads, I'll be shot
 If more than a single he'll add to his score
 Each time that he hits them, and if he does more,
 In spite of the way that the fielders I'll place,
 It won't be a quartette, it won't be a brace,
 The leather will simply go into the ditch,
 From where I'll arrange for the Cold Marston pitch,
 So that will count three, but answers the same,
 For keeping Jem Naylor's bat out of the game.
 Meantime, in the timber-yard, ructions there'll be,
 And Jemmy of course must retire, don't you see,
 When falls the tenth wicket, and that shall take place
 Before the Long Bennington's "out of the race."

Low made the right call when the coin was on spin,
 Cold Marston was 'out,' and Long Bennington 'in.'
 Our batsmen ran up just one hundred and two,
 So Marston thought they would have little to do
 To equal or beat such a moderate score,
 Jem Naylor, they judged, would add fifty or more ;
 But, thanks to our skipper, he'd scored twenty-six
 When 'number ten's' bails took their leave of the sticks.
 Said Naylor: 'I can't think however it came
 That Marston should lose this Long Bennington game ;
 I felt in such form, I'd have leathered the lot
 If only my share of the bowling I'd got ;
 But, play as I would, in the score-book you'll see
 Each hit that I made was a "one" or a "three,"
 Which made us change ends, and the rest of our lot
 Went in for what I should describe as "a rot."
 We've lost ; but it's owing to Anthony Low,
 Not *play*, boys, but *captaincy* won it I trow.'
 'That's true, sir,' cried Anthony ; 'and, by the gods,
 You'll never score evens when I want them odds !'

SPORT IN ZAMBESIA.

By J. R. ROBERTS.

ADRIAN VAN DER BYL, our Dutch comrade, expressed a hope that there were elephants in the neighbourhood ; Umtetati, the garrulous, said he had seen plenty of spoor, and there must be elephants ; whilst we Englishmen, having travelled over 8000 miles and spent some thousand golden sovereigns, declared that there ought to be elephants, otherwise the country was a fraud. Eventually we encountered the noble monster, securing good store of ivory ; but, inasmuch as the elephant phase of our adventures arrived towards the termination of the same, I must commence my story at the beginning, and briefly trace our sporting history in its due sequence.

We had with us four waggons, fifty-two oxen, eight horses, several donkeys, and half-a-dozen Kafirs. One of the white men of the party had been with the Chartered Company's pioneer force ; another had lived for many years in Matabeleland ; Van der Byl was a right experienced traveller and hunter ; whilst the

remainder were fairly well-up as regards South African ways and sports. Umtetateti, our major-domo, cook, interpreter, and handy man, was the most intelligent of the 'boys,' as native attendants are invariably called—and, as his name implies, an inveterate gossip.

Having reached the scene of our proposed camp, and after seeing the waggons outspanned upon the banks of a river, two of us strolled away, rifle in hand. We had not gone far before we saw, not a hundred yards off, a sable antelope, standing erect and proud, and watching us intently, as though he wondered what we did there. Promptly I dropped upon one knee, and promptly he dropped as the bullet crashed into him. He was up again immediately, and, though obviously hard hit, disappeared into the thick bush. We followed our quarry as best we could, guided by the bloody slot, but gathering darkness and the fear of being lost compelled us to return empty-handed to camp. Arrived there, we were vicariously gratified by finding that Van der Byl & Co. had bagged a kudu. This we grilled and sumptuously supped upon, finding it very pretty eating, right pleasing to the palate. A certain lordly traveller, wielding a more or less *graphic* pen, and skilled in culinary criticism, has testified to the toothsome-ness of a similar dish, partaken of under similar circumstances.

Next morning we were up betimes. The sun had not risen, and it was piercingly cold. Umtetateti placed coffee and venison before us, and warmth of body and ardour of soul returned. We proceeded to look for giraffe, as the boys reported spoor. Riding along, we encountered several herds of kudu, wildebeeste, and zebra, firing, however, not a shot, for fear of driving the giraffe out of the country. Failing in our desires, after tiffin we walked out, bent upon shooting something, cost what it may; and we bagged kudu, duikers, and stembok, all of which were found tame and approachable. Also some pigs were shot in a little copse down by the river behind the camp.

A few days after we rode up to several wildebeeste (gnu), bringing three to hand handsomely. When wounded, gnu are very fierce, and often endanger the lives of the sportsmen; fortunately they can't climb trees, whilst it is marvellous how adroit some of us become at that exercise. An eland, too, fell to the rifle of one of us. We had an exhilarating gallop, splashing across the sluijts, leaping fallen trees, and scratching and tearing clothes and faces as we crushed through mimosa and



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waacht-en-bietje thorn. The eland was hit in the haunch (a sad blunder), but we caught him up, and sending a bullet through his head, brought him down.

At the expiration of a week we had skins pegged out, and other trophies secured to show that we had killed a fair number of antelope, eland, wildebeeste, buck of various kinds, and giraffe. The latter are worth some 20*l.* apiece. The skins make sjamboks, and the meat is good for biltong; but it is hardly sportsmanlike to kill such harmless, graceful creatures.

For some days afterwards we did very little shooting; our principal excitement consisting in avoiding or killing snakes (as circumstances necessitated), and in listening to some very tall stories related by Umtetati bearing upon the subject indicated, of whose reminiscences and narratives anon.

There were a few books in the waggon treating of sport, natural history, and kindred topics, as you may guess. A portion of an old work, Dr. Shaw's *Zoology*, headed 'Amphibia, order Serpentes,' seemed very appropriate reading, seeing that daily and nightly we encountered the most ugly and venomous snakes. This writer says that 'fangs or poisonous teeth are always situated in the anterior and external part of the upper jaw, and are generally of much larger size than the other teeth.' Hence, when in some pathless expanse of densest bosage, or upon the precipitate side of a thorn-clad kopje, you suddenly find yourself confronted with a huge ophidian, you can readily discover whether apprehension regarding your safety need be entertained or not, by calmly and critically noting these things; the serpent, meanwhile . . . ! Again, what about that huge and noxious reptile that hangs from the bough of a tree, right over your path, looking for all the world like a verdant and immovable tendril, and only discovers itself to be viperian when it has your horse, your ox, your ass, or yourself fast in a deadly grasp! *enraptured*, as was Laocoon of old!

Another old work, quite as reliable as the one just alluded to, repaid our perusal thus: 'Though Africa is not exempt from the scourge of venomous or dangerous reptiles, still it has comparatively fewer than other tropical countries, owing to the dryness of the climate. The reptiles harboured by the desert regions consist chiefly of harmless lizards and serpents of a small size, though often venomous.' This author, like all authors, was bounded by his light; beyond his intellectual horizon he could not see. That 'though often venomous' saved his book from

being hurled into the river, or tossed into the fire. Ah, well! we were not in desert regions or waterless wastes, and serpents, often of massive proportions, abounded. Any work treating of South Africa, however well written and up to date at the time, becomes practically valueless a few years after its publication, so rapidly is fresh light thrown upon the Dark Continent through the energy and research of travellers, sportsmen, prospectors, and scientists.

We were very much concerned in our endeavours to avoid the too-pressing attentions of serpents, both in or out of camp, by day and by night, in the bush and around the tents. Luckily, no one was bitten, though the boys were much perturbed; a condition by no means lessened by the graphic histories unfolded by Umtetateti for our and their edification. I have said that the whole of our party escaped from the bite of anfractuious creatures, characterising such immunity as 'lucky.' But Umtetateti (and here comes a mild introductory sample of his genius as a yarner) affected to regret that the serpents had spared us and himself, thereby depriving him of the opportunity of exhibiting his skilful and ever successful remedy for snake bite. Sitting round the camp-fire one evening, duly employed with the accustomed pipes and the vile Transvaal tobacco, we were treated to the following from our story-teller:—

'I was once bitten in the calf of the leg by a puffadder,' said Umtetateti. 'Were a white man to be bitten by a creature so venomous he would at once resort to a variety of patent tinctures, using whisky freely at the same time, as is the wont of white men, with or without excuse. He would, moreover, be greatly terrified, despairing of his life. Mark the calmness of my demeanour and the simplicity and efficacy of my remedy. I simply seized a stick and killed the reptile at a blow, after which I quietly took a certain herb from my pouch and swallowed it. I shall not indicate this herb, which is a secret but certain specific. Then I skinned the snake, and devoured its flesh, with the exception of the head, thereby miraculously aiding the operation of the herb, which is a wonderful and instantaneous remedy against the bite of the most venomous snake. The same evening I returned to my kraal with the skin wound round my head by way of a triumphant ornament.' He refused to disclose the nature of the antidote, though offered a handsome premium for the same, but he promised to treat any one who was bitten, and guaranteed an immediate cure.

After this Umtetateti recounted another adventure of his, disclosing a history of his married life. 'One of my wives,' said he, 'is a very large and fat woman, worth ten good oxen, and yet I got her for nothing. I will tell you.' Now it must be borne in mind that the romantic story of the winning of Amafuta, his aristocratic and corpulent chief wife, is vouched for by himself, unsupported by other testimony. It may be true; it may not. We had no evidence; nor had any of us ever beheld the lady supposed to be fascinating enough to represent the value of no less than 'ten good oxen.'

Some time before the 'War of the Axe,' Umtetateti was travelling near the Oora, in Gcalekaland, and saw a large python lying in the road, dead, as he thought. However, he took little notice of it, and on arriving at some huts further on, asked who had killed the monster. Someone replied that it might perhaps be asleep, so in company with four other men he went back to inspect it. They had not gone far when they saw it in the road coming towards them, evidently following up the scent Umtetateti had left in passing. Two of the men promptly fled, being presently followed by the other two, leaving Umtetateti (a great hero, according to his own showing) to encounter the gigantic reptile single-handed. He ambushed himself behind a large mimosa, and when the snake had got within a dozen yards of him, fired, breaking its back about a foot from the neck. The snake, on perceiving the smoke from the gun, made a bound and coiled itself round the thorn-tree, taking off Umtetateti's hat, and crushing off the heel of his boot, which luckily was rather loose. The snake, in its pain and anger, completely stripped the tree of leaves and branches, leaving only the bare trunk, in which the boot-heel was subsequently found deeply and firmly imbedded, so impressive was the squeeze of the creature's body. When the python showed signs of expiring, Umtetateti retook his vaunted courage and emerged from a hollow ant-heap into which he had retreated, and fired a charge of buckshot into its neck and killed it. When he saw that the reptile was really dead, he began to think what the consequences might have been to his valuable person had he missed, and considerable trepidation came upon the warrior. However, he quickly resumed his wonted air and feeling of valorousness (according to his own account), and going to Kreli, the King of Gcalekaland, reported that he had killed the Great Nuisance with utmost peril of his life; whereupon the chief, observant of the law that the brave

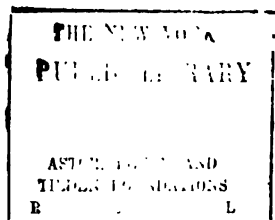
deserve the fair, gave Umtetati his stout and attractive daughter, the intombi Amafuta, to wife. The princess, coloured, of course, was very fat, and pleasing to the male Kafir's eye; she was (in the words of Whyte Melville), 'Black but comely.' Thus the valiant Umtetati, upon his own showing, acquired a high-born and right desirable spouse without losing a single bullock in the transaction.

At last there appeared to be a prospect of killing an elephant. The boys had seen spoor in the vicinity of the camp, and one morning Umtetati and a young Kafir (a Fingo) named Icuba, went out prospecting, or rather, reconnoitring. Coming to a marshy spot, warily looking out for snakes, with which their minds were ever occupied, owing to the frequency with which we encountered those hateful and dangerous reptiles, neither of them was surprised to see a vermicular object undulating upon the top of some huge and strong reeds which fringed the margin of the morass. Icuba aimed a fierce blow at the creature, whereupon the presumed serpent erected itself, seized him round the body, and flung him high into the air, whence, owing to the unalterable law of gravitation, he flopped heavily into the water. At the same time a scream of pain was heard, followed by the trumpetings of an injured and enraged elephant, which came quickly out of the water, wherein the great creature had been bathing shoulder-deep, and hidden by the rank growth of the lake. Umtetati turned and fled, whilst Icuba scrambled ashore and disappeared into the bush in an opposite direction; and the wounded elephant, baffled in his attempts to further punish his assailants, dashed off into the scrub at a rate which controverts Shakespeare's phrase, 'Slow as the elephant' (*Troilus and Cressida*). Doubtless the Immortal Bard never saw an infuriated elephant in its native wilds. Need it be said that Icuba had 'bashed' with his *imduku* or *intonga* (knobkerrie) the *umboko* (trunk) of the beast which was oscillating among the reeds!

Early the following morning we left camp, and after traversing a very thick bush got to a high elevation. Umtetati, whose eyes are as agile as his tongue, discovered five elephants on a hill opposite. An hour's scramble brought us to a game track, whence we again reconnoitred the elephants, selecting the outside one for our quarry. After much careful and arduous toil we got their wind, and then worked cautiously on towards them. When within thirty or forty yards we could just see one elephant's back over the top of a bush. Our weapons were one eight-bore breechloader, an eight-bore muzzleloader, and Um-



"and flung him high
into the air"



tetateti had a single-barrel rifle, a weapon with which he has killed seven elephants by himself—so he said. The breech-loader was leading, closely followed by the muzzleloader, Umtetateti directing the operations from the rear. We were moving to the left in order to get sight of the elephant's head, when another of the troop, a youngster, came round a corner and peeped at us, head on. Then it became necessary to bag the juvenile first. This the breechloader accomplished by landing a bullet about four inches above the right eye, through what is called the 'old eye.' The large elephant, disturbed by the report, came into view, and faced towards us. The muzzle-loader was levelled at him, but missed fire. Then came the opportunity of Umtetateti. He fired, turning the elephant, giving time to reload the breechloader. Again the elephant was struck by a bullet which caused him to gyrate in a small circle. For the third time the breechloader smashed its leaden missile into him, delivering a fatal shot, which entered behind the orifice of the ear, raking forward so as either to break the vertebra or reach the brain. At all events he was killed, and the young and old elephant lay stone dead within twenty yards of the spot where the shots were fired.

We returned to camp well satisfied, and full of hope and determination as regards the further prosecution of the campaign. That night a direful bush-fire broke out, and raged so furiously that though we lost none of our possessions and effects, owing to timely precautions, most of the snakes in the neighbourhood were destroyed. This did not trouble us much. But the game was driven away; and so, perforce, we sought fresh woods and pastures new, the recital of our adventures wherein may some day serve to more or less adorn a tale.

THE MYSTERY OF LOCH-NA-GARR.

By 'RELLIM.'

'Oh! for the crags that are wild and majestic,
The steep frowning glories of dark Loch-na-Garr!'



O wrote Lord Byron, when in after years, and amid the tumults and difficulties which beset his tempestuous career, his mind reverted to those hours of peaceful tranquillity and keen enjoyment of Nature's stirring grandeurs which had characterised his youthful reside

in the land of his forefathers, under the shadow of 'dark Loch-na-Garr.'

Less poetically expressed, perhaps, but, I venture to think, equally profound, were the feelings of admiration and awe inspired in the breasts of three English gentlemen who, engaged upon a shooting and fishing expedition in the wild romantic country situated to the westward of the 'granite city,' found themselves a few autumns ago, one lovely morning in Mid-September, encompassed by the 'infinite variety of slopes and woods' which adorn the base of the famous mountain.

We had been located in the neighbourhood some few weeks, and had enjoyed the best of sport. The weather was delightful, except that the absence of rain minimised our essays with the rod and line. Our quarters represented the acmé of perfection in highland 'diggings,' and the society of one or two choice spirits within dining distance completed, and no doubt accounted for to some extent, the optimistic views we were unanimously imbued with whenever a debateable topic cropped up in conversation. Altogether, we were thoroughly in harmony with ourselves and our surroundings, and disposed to regard with the eye of charitable tolerance everything and every one, excepting always, of course, any event which should threaten a premature termination of our highland sojourn. Of this untoward catastrophe, however, there seemed to be but slight probability, and, with the recklessness of men who feel that time is no object, we determined forthwith upon an ascent of the mountain as far as the famous 'tarn' or diminutive loch from which the locality takes its name.

Our guide, philosopher, and friend, upon the numerous expeditions we achieved, was an ancient ghillie—yclept Angus Gordon—a clansman of the famous poet before referred to, by the way, and to him, accordingly, we instinctively turned upon the present occasion for information concerning the nature of the ascent and the probabilities of sport on the shores of the loch. Somewhat to our surprise, however, Angus received the proposed excursion with no great warmth, and, although he cautiously refrained from committing himself to a downright expression of disfavour, he assumed the air of a man who could, an' he would, a tale unfold, which should rapidly and effectively damp the ardour with which we now pressed the scheme. Failing, however, in our attempts to draw from him anything more definite than an avowal that the loch was noted as 'uncanny,' and that

whipping its waters for fish was 'safe tae bring about a judgment on us a', we cut the matter short by despatching Angus for our tackle and a luncheon basket, which, we informed him, he might send by the hands of an under-keeper, who should, for that afternoon, supply his place. Angus accordingly departed upon his errand, with a final quotation anent angels and 'fules,' and we amused ourselves in the meantime by attempting impossible feats of marksmanship with a revolver one of our party carried.

In due time Angus himself returned to us, accompanied by a young fellow carrying our things, and respectfully intimated that since we were bent upon flying in the face of local tradition, which affirmed that the last man who had gone a fishing in 'Lachin-a-Gair,' had fallen a victim to his foolhardiness, by means of a certain stranger encountered upon the loch-side, whose errand was angling, though not piscatorial, it would be well for us to have a 'douce,' reliable man in the party. In short, Angus seemed to think it quite within the bounds of probability that we should encounter a certain monarch, whose personality of late has been much disputed among men of science and eminent divines. Nevertheless, he preferred to run all risks rather than delegate his authority to young Jock, and so, peace being restored, we started in high spirits, with Angus stepping out manfully in advance, and Jock, with the baskets, bringing up the rear.

Our way led at first through a somewhat dense plantation of pine and fir, and it was when passing over a partially clear space, which admitted the rays of the afternoon sun, that we had our first little adventure of the day. My brother Mac—an aggressively argumentative youth—was holding forth with great fervour upon the comparative merits of the whirling dun and willow fly, and treating us to a general *résumé* of his views upon the art of fly-fishing, both for trout and salmon, when he suddenly lost the thread of his argument in a wild yell, and, springing back a step, pointed out a family of adders into whose midst he had inadvertently marched. As the reptiles showed fight by hissing viciously and refusing to glide out of the track, we promptly set about their extermination with loose stones and our walking-sticks, and, in the interests of game birds whose eggs and young had many times, no doubt, been devoured, we executed summary jurisdiction upon no less than five, one escaping into the heather roots, where we lost sight of him. Angus Gordon was particularly active in the fight, and subse-

quently informed us that a little fellow of seven, a nephew of his, had met his death some years back from the bite of an adder, which stung him as he scampered bare-legged over the moor. In addition, Angus related so many stories of the damage done to game and to sheep, that we felt that, in despatching five reptiles in one day, we had fairly earned the gratitude of the whole Scottish nation.

At length, after a climb of some 1300 feet, and without further incident worthy of record, we reached the loch. Thoroughly impressed as we were by the silent grandeur of the scene, we yet felt that we had an important duty to perform, and quickly selected a suitable spot in which to discuss the contents of the luncheon basket. There is certainly nothing like a smart climb in bracing mountain air for sharpening one's appetite, and, as game pies, cold ham, and oaten cakes, grew smaller by degrees, and beautifully less, to the accompaniment of a modicum of Pommery and just a nip of white brandy, we felt—at least, I did—that not for the most sumptuous of aldermanic banquets would we exchange our present surroundings.

There being no boat upon the loch, we were obliged, perforce, to cast from the shores. This disadvantage, however, was greatly diminished by the rapidity with which the water deepened, and, at a few yards out, a depth of twelve to twenty feet was easily obtainable. In a quarter of an hour we had—three of us—each made a capture of fine trout from 5 to 7 lbs., and during the afternoon we continued to enjoy plenty of sport, the fish rising with great freedom, and in some cases affording capital runs.

As the day wore on, the weather, which had been bright and warm, changed somewhat. Dark banks of cloud gathered around the mountain tops above us, and, here and there, descended in thick, misty volumes, almost to the surface of the tarn. As, however, the change was all in our favour for angling purposes, we had no cause for complaint, and continued to fish with increasing zest as the baskets grew heavier and heavier.

It was while keenly engaged with an unusually fine trout—the pick of the day's take he ultimately proved, scaling just over 9 lbs.—that I chanced to look round, and, much to my surprise, observed a brother craftsman similarly employed upon the opposite shore of the loch. Beyond a passing reflection that the stranger appeared to be in a somewhat dangerous position from the steepness of the shore at his point, I was unable for

some ten minutes or so to devote further attention in his direction ; but, the work of netting and landing my prize safely accomplished, I called to Angus and despatched him with our compliments to the unknown angler, and an inquiry as to what sport he had. Angus returned in the course of half an hour, with the astounding assertion that he had been right round the loch as far as he could get, but had failed to catch sight of any human being, angling or otherwise. This in itself was not so extraordinary, but for the fact that until within a few minutes of Angus' return I had kept my eye upon the stranger's movements, wondering how he obtained a footing on the perilous slopes he traversed. With a not too complimentary remark to Angus, I called to my companions, and, relating to them the incident, started to make the stranger's acquaintance upon my own account. The route was not easy, and, by the time I reached the spot at which I judged the quest should cease, I was considerably out of breath. Stopping to rest a moment, I was struck by the fact that all along that side of the loch for some two hundred yards, the rocks ran precipitately into the water from a height of fifty or sixty feet, and that it would have been impossible for a goat, much less a man, to ramble along the shore casting for trout. Not a little surprised, I clambered up the cliffs to a point from which I could command the whole loch ; but, aided even by my field glass, I could discover no sign or trace of the missing man. Could he, I wondered, have fallen, a victim to his temerity and eagerness, into the waters of the loch. The idea, terrible as it seemed, appeared the only feasible explanation of the stranger's disappearance, and, hurrying once more to the margin, I shouted to my friends to join me, keeping meanwhile a sharp look-out myself, and straining every nerve to catch any sign or sound that might indicate the whereabouts of the missing man. For fully half-an-hour we waited in a state bordering upon a fever heat of anxiety and tension ; but no sound or sign could we discover, and at last, when it seemed impossible to doubt that assistance, should it really have been necessary, would then be too late, we gloomily made our way round the loch on our homeward journey. My friends endeavoured to rally me from the depression which the incident occasioned, and pointed out that the strange angler, observing Angus coming round the loch, and wishing, for some reason, to escape observation, had probably climbed the hill and betaken himself off by another route. They also laid stress

upon the point that no sounds or cries had been heard to indicate an accident, and that, although a little unusual, there was nothing really alarming in a man's churlish desire to refrain from meeting a fellow-sportsman. To these arguments I had but one reply to make—an effectual one as it seemed to me—viz., that I had carefully observed the movements of the stranger until within five minutes of Angus' return, when, seeing him approach, I strolled to meet him, and lost sight of the angler behind an intervening rock. Indeed, I had been about to inquire how it was Angus had failed to deliver my message, when his statement that no angler occupied the farther shore, turned my thoughts into another channel.

As, however, it appeared useless to discuss the subject farther at that time, and as the day was rapidly waning, we made the best of our way home, uncertain, on my part, whether to regard the day's events with gratification or regret. Nothing perhaps so quickly induced me to take an optimistic view of the occurrence as the doleful prognostications of Angus, who informed me, with every appearance of commiseration and sympathy, that he was certain I had seen 'the deil himsel', and that in all probability my days of angling, or indeed of anything else in this mundane sphere, would be but few.

We made sedulous inquiries during the next day or two as to whether there was news anywhere in the neighbourhood of a person missing, and it was to our diligence in this direction that we ultimately owed a solution of the mystery. The Rev. Mr. Grant, a minister in the locality, called upon us one afternoon, and, intimating that he had heard of our adventure, and that he thought he could explain the mystery, went on to say that he thought there was little doubt that I had been the victim of an atmospheric delusion. Certain conditions of sunshine and vapour, he asserted, had been known to exert a peculiar reflecting property upon the shores of the loch, and, in all probability, the mysterious stranger was none other than a reflection of my own figure. Mr. Grant informed me that some years ago he had himself been deceived by a similar phenomenon, but, suspecting its cause, he made sundry sudden and erratic movements which were exactly mirrored, thus proving the correctness of his suspicions, and, he added, no doubt had I done the same thing I should myself have been spared all anxiety on behalf of the missing angler of Loch-na-Garr.

MY FIRST GORILLA.

By 'CHAMELEON.'

IN the gloomy recesses of the primeval forests still to be found in Central Africa there is a vast, unexplored field still stretching forth its measureless space to the hunter and the naturalist. To those who know the face of Nature as it is before the corrosive hand of civilisation sweeps across it, there is little ground for wonder that the two are almost always in a greater or lesser degree united. Occasionally, then, even the most ardent hunter will lose the blood instinct that animates him, and, lowering his rifle, perhaps in a moment of great personal danger, will forget his long and laboriously sought quarry, to watch some new trait or instinct in the animal that, unconscious of his presence, gambols before him. It is of such an episode that I now write.

My guide (a gigantic Fan) and I had been for two days after big game with but little success, until shortly after noon on the second day we struck what appeared to be one of those dense patches of impenetrabilia, that cannot be described, but must be seen to be fully understood. Behind us stretched vast avenues of trees, the height of which was lost in the leafy clouds, which shut out the fierce, burning glare of the sun, and rendered even the terrible noontide cool and pleasant. In front of us came the thick, intertwining stems and matted growth of vines and creepers, with stunted bushes and long pendent masses, impenetrable save where some gigantic brute had crashed a passage through, leaving his tracks in broken branches, crushed bushes, and thickly scattered twigs. Birds with gorgeous plumage and harsh, discordant voices peopled the trees, the chirp of a grasshopper, the hiss of a serpent in the grass, or the shrill sound of a locust, and occasionally the hoot of an owl, or the chatter of a stray monkey, which sounded strangely in the peculiar silence of the forest at noon. As we advanced along the track, slowly and with great difficulty, we seemed to leave them behind, and entered into a region of semi-darkness, a faint greenish-black light, as though the glorious sunlight overhead, balked of finding a direct inlet to the ground, had been filtered through yards and yards of dense-growing foliage, and, unconquered by all the forces of vegetation, had succeeded in

sending a faint resemblance of itself, like that found in some dim cathedral aisle. My eyes struggled with the gloom, and seemed to have an instinctive power to dilate their pupils sufficiently to magnify or condense the attenuated rays, until they were able to illumine the surrounding Plutonian depths.

My guide suddenly paused, and made a sign to me with his open palm, which, in the language of the hunter, tells he has struck a trail, or heard some token of the proximity of game which had escaped my less acute powers. I advanced cautiously to his side, and, following the direction of his finger with my eye, peered through the brush, and saw that we stood upon the edge of a small clearing, overshadowed by an enormous tree, whose foliage, without really emitting a greater volume of light, seemed to equalise the gleam, and so render objects at a distance of thirty or forty yards perfectly perceptible.

Right opposite to us, with his back against a tree, was the sleeping form of a huge gorilla, his hands hanging down by his side, his legs crooked in front of him, and his head listlessly lying sidewise on his shoulder. Some distance from him was the female, apparently busy gathering nuts, swinging from tree to tree, now disappearing in the surrounding forest, but ever and anon returning to keep watch and ward over her sleeping lord and master. For some minutes I hesitated as to what course to pursue, whether to try to get any closer, as the distance was rather a long one in such a light to attack a dangerous antagonist like a gorilla, who, if only wounded, would, in all probability, with the enraged female, charge right down upon us at close quarters; or if I should take all risks, and rely on the second rifle of my guide, whose steadiness in ticklish places was tried and true.

At last I decided to take my chances where I was; but upon raising my rifle I heard such a scream of agony from the female which caused the sleeper to start to its feet, and, as it did so, the female literally fell from a tree at the edge of the clearing to the ground, uttering the most piercing cries that human imagination can conceive. Then a terrific roar that shook the very ground broke upon the silence, and told the history of the female gorilla's fright. It was the voice of a lion, and the female, seeing her lord awake, again fled to the trees, and looked back as if expecting him to follow. But no, scarce had the first roar died away than another, a deeper, hoarser, louder roar, more expressive of anger, revenge, cruelty, and defiance

than any sound I ever heard, pealed forth as a challenge from the hairy breast of the forest demon.

I looked at the Fan and smiled. He understood, and the quiver of excitement left his limbs, and he slowly and silently ranged up alongside of me, and, closing his mouth with an effort, grinned, placed his finger on his lips, and turned to watch with me the combat which now seemed inevitable, and in the occurrence of which lay our best chance of safety.

Scarcely thirty yards on our left the lion had come crashing through the jungle, and had cleared the close inner tangle at a bound. He now stood full in sight in the clear open, his head erect, his mane standing up and out like the hair on an angry cat, magnifying his apparent bulk to colossal proportions; his tail, which at first stood nearly straight, was waving from side to side. At length it began to strike his ribs with resounding blows, on either side alternately, and he uttered a longer and more terrific growl than the one he had given when the female gorilla escaped him. Opposite to him was the male gorilla, now most unlike the sleeping figure we had seen propped against the tree. At the first shriek of his mate he had sprung into life and sudden energy; placing the knuckles of his hands on the ground, he bounded lightly into the air to a surprising height, rising from all four hands together, and falling on to all four hands again.

When the lion roared again the gorilla seemed to comprehend the nature both of the challenge and the adversary, and to resolve upon fighting, although it would have been very easy for him to escape by springing into a tree. He rose up on to his hinder hands (or feet), and, standing erect, looked like a large-bodied, long-armed, short-legged negro, about six feet two inches in height, and, standing thus, he uttered his tremendous acceptance of the lion's challenge, beating upon his breast with alternate hands, producing a muffled, drumming sound. The lion, springing further into the enclosure, stood before him, and the gigantic ape dropped on all fours again, with his knuckles on the ground; his eyes, which had flared like rubies before, now fairly emitted sparks as he placed them on his enemy, and his eyebrows, working up and down with inconceivable swiftness, gave him an appearance of ferocity that seemed to make the lion pause, if indeed for a moment it did not make him quail.

Lashing his sides with his tail until he was in a state of inconceivable fury, the lion roared again, as though his personal

honour were no less at stake in the matter of out-roaring all antagonists than in the matter of vanquishing them, while the gorilla, albeit questions of honour seemed little likely to be considered or favoured by him, did his best in the matter of preliminary noise, and uttered another roar so utterly demoniacal and fierce, standing up to deliver it more freely, that the lion crouched at once to spring at him, and bring the question of personal prowess to a personal and muscular test. A few short, swift steps—a bound of twenty feet—two or three sharp, snarling growls—and I expected to see the combatants locked in a fatal embrace; but it was not so.

As the lion rose in his long bound, the gorilla rose also, but lighter and higher, straight into the air. The lion struck upwards to catch him, and, the action turning him partly sidewise, he fell heavily on his back, the ape dropping on him, striking him twice, and springing off with a sidling, jumping run, to a distance of several yards. Instantaneous as the encounter had been, both were severely wounded. The gorilla was bleeding from head and back. The lion had a fearful gash across his ribs, and, judging from the sound of the two crashing blows which he had received, I thought some of his ribs must have suffered. As soon as the king of beasts regained his feet, he rushed without pause at his adversary, but the agility of the gorilla was too great to allow the lion to close at his pleasure. For some minutes the movements of the lion in attack, and the ape in avoidance, were almost too rapid for the eye to follow their evolutions. At length the lion paused, bewildered by the speed and activity of his opponent. Instantly the gorilla sprang upon him, and rolled him over with a single blow upon the side of the head.

Again the chase and the avoidance were renewed, but this time for longer than before, the lion being determined to catch his agile adversary; but again he was obliged to pause, and again he was relentlessly knocked over. When he rose he staggered, whether from the effects of the terrific blows he had received, or from giddiness from his gyrating attacks on the gorilla, it was impossible to decide; but he reeled and fell off several steps to the right before he recovered sufficiently to make another charge. In the mean time the gorilla was dodging around, and bobbing up and down before him, as captured monkeys do in their cages when any one is teasing them. Both animals kept up an incessant noise, growling, barking,

snarling, screaming, varying their tones in sympathy with their actions or sufferings, and, although nothing like a close had taken place, both were bleeding freely; the lion's right eye was either closed or gone, and the gorilla was nearly scalped. The lion had now learned so much of his enemy's strength and activity, that he tried several feints to get him within range. He lay down, but the wary ape danced around his prostrate body just, and only just, out of danger, and, so close, that the lion had to keep swinging around to avoid being taken in the rear. He tried another rush, but stopped suddenly, and, when the gorilla turned upon him to strike, the king of beasts turned on his back and received him with teeth and claws.

It was easy to see the crisis of the battle had arrived. Growls, snarls, shrieks, and roars came out of a confused, swirling mass of dust and leaves in a demoniacal chorus; limbs, teeth, claws, blood, and springing bodies, as though ten fighting beasts, instead of two, were combating amidst a whirlwind. I became so excited I could scarcely command myself. A crash as of smashing large bones, and a blood-curdling shriek of agony! Then the noise and fury of the combat were redoubled for a minute or two! Then came a pause! The dust and cloud subsided! The lion was uppermost! The left arm of the gorilla was across the heavy jaws, and it was the crushing break of the bone we had just heard; his claws were firmly fixed in the gorilla's shoulder and head, but he himself was nearly torn asunder and disembowelled. Huge rents were in his body, and the feet of the gorilla were buried in his loins, while the mighty right arm of the ape was free, and would be active again directly breath was taken.

The final struggle quickly came. Up rose the cloud of dust and leaves again. Whirling, shrieking, bounding, striking, growling, struggling, the confused mass rolled hither and thither with ever-increasing velocity. Over and over it rolled, like a tangle of fighting demons, until it came uncomfortably near where my guide and I were lying hid. It swayed away from us, returned again, then rolled off and back, and, just as the Fan and I, to escape from such dangerous proximity, sprang to our feet, the combatants, locked in their deadly embrace, came crashing against us, knocking us over, and into a deep pit which we had not seen, falling upon us with a force that for a moment deprived me of consciousness. Recovering almost immediately, I struggled violently, fearing that, even if the brutes had

killed each other, I would be smothered under their bleeding carcasses. I kicked, and pushed, and writhed, feeling the loose hair from their hides impeding my breathing, and entering my nostrils and throat; the hot, fetid smell of heated animals nearly suffocated me, and, in spite of my struggles, I did not seem to gain an inch. The noise above me was terrific, but it seemed to me that I could distinguish my own name above the hellish tumult, and it struck me that the tones were not unfamiliar. I ceased in my efforts to extricate myself, and, strange as it may seem, I distinctly heard my name called, 'Will!' 'Will!' and, great Heavens! it was the voice of my wife, far away in New York.

I gave up! Delirium preceding death! I knew it was all over, when, just as I had resigned myself, I heard again, 'Will! Will! you wretched man, wake up! Oh, do wake up! You've got the nightmare, and fallen out of bed! You've dragged all the clothes off, and rolled yourself into a tight ball, and I cannot get you loosed, and you will smother to death if you do not wake up, as sure as shooting!'

'Great Scott!' I cried, 'what brought you here, just in the nick of time? I was wondering why Mrs. Gorilla did not come to her hubby's assistance, just when I fell into this pit, and the brutes fell on me. She would have been safe enough, for her mate would have held the old fellow tight while she got in her fine work.'

'Now, my dear man,' said my wife, severely, 'if I hear any more about this monkey fight, I'm going to get you admitted to one of these Keeley institutes for gold cure and perpetual motion, before any more harm is done by the secret drinking that must be responsible for a state like this. Gorilla! oh, yes, lots of gorillas out in the street; that's what woke me up! Then I found you rolled in a ball, grunting and muttering, and directly I touched you away you rolled off the bed, bump, taking all the clothes with you, and, once on the floor, tangled yourself up worse than ever. Now, do get up and help put the things straight.'

'Where is my noble Fan?' I asked, still half asleep.

It was an injudicious question. My wife's naturally ample stock of patience gave way.


'Your fan, indeed! if you want a fan, and are so very over-heated, you'll find mine on the bureau, but I'll trouble you for the bedclothes. I want no fans, noble or simple; my teeth

are chattering. Now, get up, there's a good fellow, the last gorilla has been taken to the police precinct, and you can go and compare notes with the whole lot in the morning. That's right !'

And in five minutes that dear woman was fast asleep, as if no gorillas or lions had been nearer her couch than Central Park. Next morning she threatened me with a separation if I went on any more tropic hunts without permission, and, if by chance I stay a little late at my club, I am saluted, on reaching the scene of the famous contest, with a sleepy voice, asking, 'Any gorillas in yours, to-night, Will?'

WELL WON.

By 'DOOKER.'

HE Gorseshire Hunt, though a provincial one, was situated in a decidedly sporting part of the country, and boasted of many good and true sportsmen, and straight and hard riders, not only of the male, but of the gentler sex, and of no better man to hounds than the hero of this story, Charlie Larkspur. The country was a good one ; grass predominated, though some of it was what is called 'down' country and more suited for sheep than for dairy-farming. The vales, however, were very stiffly fenced, and the big 'doubles' with which it abounded required some doing both on the part of rider and horse ; plenty of nerve and judgment on the part of the former ; breeding, courage, power, and cleverness, on the part of the latter. The Hunt was a comparatively small one, and was mainly composed of hard-riding farmers, who generally had a good young horse or two to sell after they had learnt their business, a few country squires, and a sprinkling of officers from the neighbouring garrison towns of Downton, and Winterbourne. The country was hunted by the Earl of Haggismore, a hard-riding, hard bitten, keen Scotsman, whose whole soul was in the sport, and who, not being able to enjoy on his own ancestral domains in the chilly North the only sport he thought worth living for, had migrated south and taken the Gorseshire country, which he hunted four days a week in princely style.

Amongst the several ladies that occasionally graced his field were two whom his Lordship regarded with mixed feelings of

admiration and detestation. The first was Miss Lucy Bracebank, the only child of an old Tory Squire, who could trace his pedigree back to the Conquest, and the second, Miss Penelope Perkins, also the only child of a rich and Radical merchant from Cottonopolis, who had bought a large estate in Gorseshire, went in for being a county magnate and J.P., entertained largely, subscribed 'andsomely to the 'ounds' (as he said), and in fact did all he knew to gain popularity and push himself forward, in spite of intense vulgarity and an utter indifference to the use of the letter 'h.'

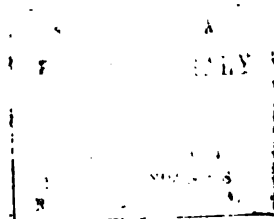
Now to describe my *dramatis personæ*: 'Place aux dames,' so we will begin with the ladies, if you please.—

Miss Lucy was just turned 20; stood about 5 ft. 5 in., with a slight graceful figure, fair golden hair, that curled and waved in masses over her well shaped, well set on, little head, violet eyes, and a complexion hard to beat, in spite of her devotion to field sports, for, be it known, the little lady could throw a capital fly, was an excellent horsewoman, and had been known to make very good practice at the bunnies on a summer's evening with a little rook rifle. Her greatest charm, however, lay in her manner, which was frank, open and devoid of all affectation. She always said and did the right thing at the right moment, and every man, woman, and child, for a radius of some miles round her father's house, swore by Miss Lucy, for she had a kind word and a bright cheery smile for everyone. Of all the sports, however, to which she was addicted, hunting was her favourite. She had begun when quite a child, and being a chip of the old block, had learnt to *watch* hounds and ride with judgment. She had plenty of nerve, and would ride her own line in a run in spite of the numerous offers of pilotage she received. She and Charlie Larkspur had grown up together from childhood, and though he was some years her senior, they were sworn allies. On the young man's part it must be admitted the feeling of friendship had developed into something very nearly akin to love, though no words had as yet passed between them that could have been taken exception to by the strictest duenna.

Now for Miss Penelope. She, too, had pretensions to good looks, but they were of a coarser, more full blown, type. She was tall, dark, and somewhat inclined to *embonpoint*, and though her youth kept her figure as yet within decent bounds, it bade fair in time to develop into the fat and frowsy order. She had strongly



Charles hat is in the air.



marked eyebrows, and masses of coarse, straight, black hair, which no amount of crimping and the most untiring maid could make curl over her large, but boldly formed head. Her beauty (such as it was) was, however, completely marred by an habitual look of discontent, and the thin compressed lips and sneering expression betokened only too plainly her bad temper. She was to a certain extent admired, and got the homage generally paid to a known heiress and her prospective money bags; but she was no favourite, and had as yet no suitor for her hand. Her father and Squire Larkspur were near neighbours, but the Tory Squire fought rather shy of the 'shoddy' one, and hardly ever accepted the many proffered invitations to 'dine and shoot' at Twine Court, Mr. Perkins' residence. Charlie, however, who was troubled with but few political qualms of conscience, often availed himself of Mr. Perkins' hospitality, saying, 'The beggar's got good liquor and good coverts, and why shouldn't I help him to drink the one and shoot the other? and then, you know, Governor,' he used to add by way of clinching the argument, 'I *might* convert him, and get him to join the Primrose League! There's no saying!' And so 'generous youth' went and enjoyed himself; but he always had the good taste to say afterwards 'Old Perkins isn't half a bad sort when you come to know him a bit, and only wants educating!'

Miss Penelope went in hot and strong for being a hunting lady. Her father kept for her three rattling good horses, and she rode well, but her riding was mostly of the cramming, 'show off' order. She really knew nothing about hounds or what they were doing, and cared still less. As long as she got her gallop, and could show off over a stiff fence or two, she was quite satisfied. Very proud, too, was she of these performances, and would pester all the field in succession by asking such questions as these: 'Did you see me jump that gate?' or 'Wasn't that a nasty double I rode the mare over just now?' and so on *ad nauseam*.

Between her and Miss Lucy existed a certain sort of jealousy, more pronounced on her side than on the other, and she was always trying to 'cut down' her rival, often when no occasion existed for attempting the feat. Should she succeed, she never failed to make some pleasant remark thereon in Lucy's hearing, even if the remark was not addressed pointedly to her, in a sneering, half jesting tone.

The fact was, that Miss Perkins was desperately smitten with Charlie Larkspur, and though he always showed her the

courteous deference due from a gentleman to one of the weaker sex, in his heart he had the greatest abhorrence of her.

Now, having described my two heroines, let me devote a few words to give you an idea of Captain Charles Larkspur, of Her Majesty's Royal Philibeg Highlanders. He was of middle height, with a slight, though well-knit and muscular frame, laughing blue eyes, brown curly hair, and a winning expression and manner that made even strangers feel at home with him, even after a very short acquaintance. He was a good shot, a fair fisherman, rode straight and fearlessly, but with plenty of judgment, was a good cricketer and polo-player, and having had the advantage of being knocked about in the world in a regiment of thorough 'good fellows' (a sure method of taking the nonsense out of a youngster), was as nice a specimen of a good, chivalrous English gentleman as could be produced. As a boy he had been devoted to Lucy, and as he grew up this feeling of admiration had developed more and more, and he only required the courage, and opportunity, to put the question of his fate to the test.

It was at the Goresshire Hunt Ball, in the year 18—, that Charlie Larkspur came to claim Miss Lucy for an after-supper valse, when he found that young lady in a most dejected frame of mind, and on pressing her to tell him the cause thereof she said :

'Oh, Charlie! I've made such a donkey of myself. I've got into a nice mess, and don't know how to get out of it'

'Well,' he replied, 'you know two heads are said to be better than one, so tell me the difficulty, and let's lay our heads together, and see if we can't extricate you from it; come and sit out this dance, and tell me all about it.'

Being snugly ensconced in an out of the way corner, she began, 'Oh! I'm so vexed with myself, but I really couldn't help it. At supper I happened to be sitting next to Miss Perkins, and she began her usual talk about having had the best of it in yesterday's run, and added, "I suppose, Miss Bracebank you got 'out' of it because you didn't have that post and rails by Brockhole's Farm?" "My mount was a young one," I replied, "and I thought he mightn't quite fancy such a stiff bit of timber at the beginning of a run, but if I had been riding old Gamecock, I think I should have seen as much of it as you did." I couldn't help having this one:

little slap at her, Charlie! "Oh! I don't think your horse's heart would have failed him if *yours* hadn't Miss Bracebank," she answered, sneeringly, turning round and giggling at that odious cousin of hers who had taken her in to supper. I'm afraid I muttered something about being able to go where she couldn't, for she suddenly turned sharp round on me and said, "Come, Miss Bracebank, I'll lay you an even 'pony'" (by the bye, what *is* a pony, Charlie?) you don't pound me the day after to-morrow when our hounds meet at Westwood Farm." I don't know what possessed me, but I said, "Done," and the odious creature wrote it down on the back of her ball programme. I'm sure a pony must mean a lot of money, Charlie. I've spent all my allowance, and if I lose, as I certainly shall, for poor old Gamecock is lame, I don't know what to do. I daren't ask the dear old dad, for you know how he hates betting in any shape, and in a woman he always says it's ten times worse than in a man.'

Whilst the little lady had been pouring out her woes, an amused expression gradually stole over her listener's countenance, which culminated in a grim smile, as he replied, 'Well, don't make yourself uneasy about it; only do exactly what I tell you, and I think we'll land a very pretty stake between us, and have the laugh on our side. All I'll ask you in return is to grant me a favour if the *coup* comes off. It's something you can do for me, so say yes! Will you?'

'Yes, Charlie, with all my heart,' she answered, lifting her violet eyes and looking him fair in the face.

'Done; and now let's go and finish the dance and give me another later on.'

Before they rose, however, Miss Perkins and her cousin, a very loud, snobbish looking youth, entered the little boudoir where they were sitting, and the said youth forthwith exclaimed 'Well, Miss Bracebank, have you repented of your bet? Pen's a good natured gal, and I daresay will let you huff if you hask her pretty!'

'No, Sir,' Charlie stiffly replied. 'Miss Bracebank has *not* repented of her bet, and if you like to back your opinion in this matter I'm at your service,' added he, quietly taking out a little red betting book.

'Well, I'm d—d!' was the muttered reply, but after a pause he added, 'If you like to chuck your dollars away, I may just as well pick 'em up as hanyone helse. Come now! I'll bet you a

cool 'undred Miss Perkins is nearer 'ounds than Miss Bracebank, the day hafter to-morrow, when they kill or run to ground from Westwood.'

'Done!' said Charlie. 'I—er—suppose you—a—a—would be—a—afraid to take it five times?' he added, with an exasperating drawl, and raising his eyebrows superciliously.

'No I haint,' was the answer returned with a savage snap, and the bet was booked.

'Oh, Charlie! what have you done, you silly boy, you've got yourself in as great a mess as I have,' said poor Lucy tearfully, as they got out of earshot on their return to the ball room.

'Not a bit,' laughed Charlie. 'I mean to win your bet for you, and mine as well. Five hundred will, no doubt, bring joy into many of my confiding tradesmen's hearts, for, I'm sorry to say, I'm deuced hard up; but they have behaved like trumps in not dunning me, and now I hope to pay off all my debts, thanks to that young snob. Now listen. I'll give you a mount on The Rat the day after to-morrow. We shall find for certain at Westwood, and all you've got to do is to follow me till we come to that thirty acre field of old Tolman's, the one with the big white gate out of it. You know a Westwood fox almost always takes this line, and the chances are very strongly in favour of his doing so again. The fence out of this field is impracticable, and the gate will be locked. Do you see? Now, I shall not jump into this field, but you must, and in front of Miss Perkins if possible, then ride straight down to the gate, jump off, get over, and The Rat will follow you like a dog, and I'll be the other side to put you up. Hullo! here's your dad looking for you, so you must be off, but mind, mum's the word, and The Rat shall meet you at Westwood Farm, and you can put your own saddle on him.'

And now, kind reader, I daresay you are getting rather tired of the ball, so I will ask you to accompany me to the meet of the Gorseshire hounds at Westwood Farm.

It is a glorious bright day in February, and there is a tinge of keenness in the air that often precedes a frost, just such a day, in fact, when there is generally a capital scent, and hounds will run as if tied to their fox.

Westwood Farm is an old stone-built manor house embowered in masses of ivy, and Farmer Tolman, one of the good old-fashioned sort, is bustling about, urging every one to come in, have just a cut of a home fed ham and a glass of cider or jumping powder. His pressing invitations are very generally

responded to, and justice having been done to his good things, and his Lordship having duly inspected and praised the couple of puppies the farmer is walking, there is presently a scramble for hats, caps, and whips, and a move is made, Farmer Tolman, with an air of proud proprietorship, leading the way to the covert, which lies some little way behind the house. Very proud he is too of the said covert and its fox holding properties, and is wont to boast that never has it been drawn blank, either in his own or his father's time. The covert is an irregular shaped one of some twelve acres, composed mostly of alders, brambles, and high tussocks of grass; that afford nice dry lying for a fox, whilst here and there scattered about, are clumps of thorns and gorse in patches, with an occasional oak tree, and as it lies in a hollow facing the south, and well sheltered from the north and east winds, it is generally—in fact, always—a sure find. Charlie is not at the meet much to Lucy's dismay, but The Rat is there ready for her, and as the groom brings him up he touches his hat and hands her a note 'with the Capting's compliments.' Whilst her saddle is being changed on to The Rat Lucy tears it open and reads 'Come straight to the holloa. Tear this up small when read.—Yrs. C. L.' She obeys these latter instructions, and is soon on The Rat, who snorts and plays with his bit as if he knew something out of the common was up.

Whilst Miss Lucy is trotting after the hounds, let me devote a few words to a description of the estimable quadruped on which she is mounted. He is a bright bay, hog-maned cob, only standing about 14.2, but with enormous bone, great muscular quarters and thighs, well ribbed up, clean flat legs and grand sloping shoulders, and a lean, game, well set on head and neck, whilst his large full eye and red open nostril, betoken descent from the desert born. He is as clever as a cat, can gallop, and stay; in fact, he has all the power and courage of a well-bred 16 hand weight carrier, compressed into a very small compass. Bred on the wilds of Exmoor, he has a constitution like iron, and can stand a long and hard day better than most high-priced horses. Where he cannot jump he will creep, and he will follow his master over stiff timber or a stone stile like a dog. He and Charlie are sworn allies, and to his master he is as the apple of his eye.

Hounds are about half through the covert and as yet there is no sign of a fox. The faces of the field begin to wear rather a blank look of disappointment, for it is generally an instantaneous

find, while Farmer Tolman's visage lengthens visibly, and he begins to mutter something about 'they darned poaching chaps from Clocktown been about,' when suddenly, 'Gone away! Forrard away!' rings out clearly on the frosty air from the low end of the cover.

'Tweet, tweet, tweet!' goes his Lordship's horn, as followed by Miss Lucy, Miss Perkins, her cousin, and some half-dozen others, he bustles down the main ride, the pack flying to him as he goes. As he emerges Charlie's hat is in the air.

'This way, my Lord,' he shouts, 'just under the ash tree. Ha! there, old Ladybird has it!' he exclaims, as that sage old matron confirms his statement with her deep note. There is a crash of music as the rest of the pack catch the scent and dash over the thick laid plushers of the double bank. Away they go as if running in view, and for the next ten minutes or so hounds simply race, and very few are with them. Amongst them, however, are his Lordship, his first whipper-in, Miss Lucy, Charlie, Miss Perkins, and her cousin, who, to do him justice, can ride a bit.

'Now stick to me, Lucy,' whispers Charlie, as they top the first fence, an injunction she rigidly obeys. Presently hounds check for a moment as a flock of stupid sheep wheel right across the line, and then form up looking very brave and defiant; but spreading in their cast, the pack hit off the line again directly, old Cheerful leading, and as they do so Charlie rides at the fence, but his horse swerves round, and apparently refuses passing close to Lucy. As he does so he whispers to her 'Go on' and turns off at right angles.

The rest of the field take the fence to her right and left, and as she lands into the field she sees hounds topping a big white gate at the bottom—some four feet odd of unbreakable timber. Charlie's instructions flash across her, and shaking up The Rat she spurts past every one, and rides straight down to the gate, jumps off, climbs over, and with a 'Come on old man' The Rat stands up on his hind legs and bucks over after her. Charlie is on the other side almost as soon as she is, and gives her a leg up, and as they gallop away after the now receding pack, he looks back at the group vainly trying to open the gate, Miss Perkins amongst them, and with a grim chuckle says, 'Ah; you may try as much as you like, you won't open that gate in a hurry, and I think, Lucy, we've landed our money!'

It is no time for talking, however, and on they go, the only

two with hounds, who are now bending back towards Westwood again, and at the end of another eight minutes they throw up at the mouth of a drain that runs right across a ten acre field. 'Whoo-whoop! whoo-whoop!' shouts Charlie, throwing himself from his horse, 'Get back, hounds, back Affable, back Blameless, Foxglove, Wrathful, back all of you' he adds, as some of the most eager ones begin tearing away at the stones and sods at the mouth of the drain. In a few minutes up comes his Lordship using most unparliamentary language, and cursing open drains and locked gates in no measured terms, followed by the rest of the field. Farmer Tolman's face is as long as his arm, and Miss Perkins and her cousin look as black as thunder, and their amiability is in no wise improved as Charlie, politely raising his hat, says, with his sweetest smile, 'I'm afraid Miss Perkins, you and your cousin have missed the best part of the run, and have both lost your bets. We' he added, nodding towards Lucy and taking out his watch, 'have been here just four minutes and a half.' No answer is vouchsafed as they sullenly turn away, but Lucy's face beams with delight.

As it is an impossible place to dig or bolt a fox, his Lordship very reluctantly has to give it up, and goes off to draw again in no very sweet temper. Charlie and Lucy both opine that their horses have had enough, and turn off at some cross roads on their way home, and when alone the following conversation takes place between them—

'Oh! I wish we had killed that fox. I longed to have his brush,' said the bloodthirsty young lady.

'Hum, yes; I wish you could have had it,' is the dry answer; 'but now I'm going to ask you to remember your promise made the other night, and get *me* out of a scrape.'

'Well, what is it? You haven't told me yet,' replied Lucy.

'It's this; in gratitude to The Rat for winning your bet for you, will you consent to become *his* owner as well as his master's?'

'Oh, Charlie!' was all the answer he got as she blushed up to the roots of her hair.

We will draw a veil over all the lover's talk that ensued. One gets quite enough of that sort of thing in the three volume novels of the present day, besides it would be out of place in a sporting sketch, and were I to attempt to describe it (which I can't), I should probably have Mr. Fores saying, 'Get away forrard! 'Ware riot, Dooker!' so please imagine all

these interesting or uninteresting details (according to your sex) settled satisfactorily. On Lucy making some remark as to its being very curious that the fox should have taken such a very convenient line, Charlie laughingly took up his parable and spoke thus:—

‘I am afraid the fox didn’t know much about it, and I feel rather ashamed of myself; but you know the old saying of “All’s fair in love and war,” and that young cub of a cousin of Miss Perkins’ riled me so by his cheeky patronising manner to you the other night, that I determined to take a rise out of him. But mind, you must *never* let out what I’m going to tell you. The fact is, I got hold of Jim Trivet—who is, as you know, a most arrant poacher, but a good fellow at heart, and devoted to me since I got him out of that scrape with the governor last year—and told him go and rout out the covert well with his dogs early this morning. Then, yesterday, I tipped some of those engineer chaps at Winterbourne, and got them to lend me a couple of old uniforms, theodolite chains, &c., and with the aid of some wigs, false whiskers, &c., Jim and I got ourselves up as two engineers surveying the country. One old woman asked us if we “was a measuring out her three acres” for her, and to allay her suspicions I told her an awful banger, and said ‘Yes.’ Well, I took Jim over the exact line we ran to-day, and told him to lay a strong drag (made from a wisp of straw from a tame fox’s kennel) over it, lifting it here and there, just where we had those two slight checks, and, moreover, to be *very particular to see that the big white gate was locked and nailed up!* Now do you twig?’ he added, laughing.

‘Oh, you’re a very bad boy, and I’m not at all sure that I shall keep my promise to a man who would do such an unsportsmanlike action. What would the Dad and Lord Haggismore say if they knew?’ was the response. However, they never did, and the matter was amicably settled, needless to say, as well as all other arrangements, and in a few months the following announcement appeared in the morning papers:—

‘At St. Hubert’s, Hawkstone, Gorseshire, by the Rev. Nimrod Woodville, Charles Larkspur, Captain Her Majesty’s Royal Philibeg Highlanders, only son of Frank Larkspur, of the Grange, to Lucy, only child of Thomas Bracebank, Esq., of Broom Hall, Gorseshire.’


Charlie soon after sold out, his father made over the manage-



ment of the estate to him, and the young couple settled down in Gorseshire, spending three months alternately with their respective 'governors,' as they irreverently styled them. Lucy hunts regularly twice a week, and has had many a good gallop from Westwood since, but vows she has *never* had such a good run, and *never* been so well carried as she was on the day when she and her bet were 'Well Won.'

THE GROUSE LODGE GHOST.

By 'ROCKWOOD.'

HERE are still a few, though they must part their hair very wide in the middle now, who, as they stroll up St. James' Street and along Piccadilly, recollect the story of Jack Morrison and the ghost of Kelpiedale. It was rather a smoking-room favourite at one time, more especially about the first of August, when men's minds have a moorland flavour, and all talk is of heather, guns, and grouse cocks. Jack was a Lowland Scotchman attached to a Scottish regiment, and a general favourite with everybody, although continually getting into trouble. He was a big, burly fellow, who could toss the caber, throw the hammer, and dance the Highland fling with any modern Highland athlete to be met with at the Braemar gathering. He was also a capital boxer, and it may therefore be gathered that he was a tough man in any scrimmage in which he had occasion to take part. Unlike most of his countrymen, he was the very reverse of being superstitious, and as an old Scotch servant, who was warmly attached to him, said to the minister: 'I dinna ken, sir, whether he has the feer o' God in him or no, but he is no disrespecter in that way. As to *man* he fears none, and regarding his feer o' the devil, were a water kelpie to get up at midnight and screech in the burn, as I have heeard them do, he would look for twa or three stones to settle it, as if it were a watter rat. No, sir, my master has no muckle feer o' mortal or immortal.'

It may be gathered from this that John Morrison was one of those determined, hard-headed, Lowland Scotchmen who are afraid of nothing, and have a contempt for ghosts, charms, second sight, and everything connected with Celtic superstitions.

Having resigned his commission and retired on half-pay, Captain John, for he had obtained his company, resolved to have some good Highland sport, and got hold of a Highland moor on as cheap terms as possible. Having advertised in the *Scotsman*, grouse moor agents not having established themselves in London, he was soon in communication with several Edinburgh lawyers, those astute gentlemen who in Scotland manage the not less astute factors or stewards.

Kelpiedale seemed just the very place up to Jack's mind, that is, if it was, as the Americans say, 'full up to the bill.' Lawyers in Scotland are somewhat like horsedeaders, a little unscrupulous in the matter of representation. The house at Kelpiedale was guaranteed as 'old-fashioned, but warm and comfortable;' trout fishing in the Kelpie excellent, with sea trout fishing and salmon in the lower reaches by the sea, and it was in the very grouse garden of Argyllshire. The bag to a good walker and fair shot was four hundred brace, and the rent 250*l.* per annum, which gave rights all over the feu, woodlands, hill, and all included.

'Devilish moderate,' said Jack to his old friend, Bob McKillop, of the Perth Militia, a London wine merchant of the modern order—men who have rich thirsty friends, and are likely to oblige a poor relation or an old schoolfellow down on his luck. Bob, of course, knew he would get the Kelpiedale cellars to stock, and Jack liked everything of the best, and a good deal of it at times.

'Verra moderate,' said Bob; 'five shillings the live brace under the market; if there's naething wrong there's a bargain in it. There may be something wrong wi' the house. Perhaps he'll give us a reference to the last tenant.'

'Well, Bob, you might run down to Edinburgh, make inquiries, and see for me. I'll pay all expenses, and as you need a holiday in your own country, you can do worse than take up your quarters for the autumn in Kelpiedale, people will be all out of town.'

'That is verra true,' said Bob, somewhat disconsolately, 'a man could not sell a bottle o' soda watter in the West-end of London between the first week in August and the last week o' October, indeed, I have had serious thoughts o' starting to push the business in the grouse lodge line myself. There's a fair spate o' guid drink consumed in the Hielands.'

'There is, Bob, there is,' said Jack, 'and you may make a

beginning in the Scotch business with Kelpiedale if you like, should the place really prove all that it is represented to be, but there is such a small difference between Scotch factors and *mal* efactors that I shall take care to err on the safe side.'

'You get north, Bob, and report. I would go myself, but my lawyer, who seems determined to keep my business going unsettled as long as he can write a letter at six shillings and eightpence, says my presence in London is absolutely necessary for the next three weeks. You set off, Bob, see this factor, have a look at the lodge, find out the last tenant, and why he gave it up, and do all that sort of thing. As a Scotchman you need not stumble into any error, either as regards the house accommodation or the number of the birds.'

Bob, like a good many Scotchmen in London, was home or rather heather sick. Like Sir Walter Scott, he believed he really could not live unless he saw the heather once a year. Next morning saw him whisking north from Euston to Edinburgh, and, two days later, his tall form looked like a third funnel on the stately steamer *Iona*, on his way to have a look at Kelpiedale. 'It's cheap, verra cheap,' said Bob to himself; 'but there will be something wrong, nae doot. The birds will likely no' settle on our side of the marshes after the first opening week, or there will be disease or something. However, I must find out, that's my mission. The result of Bob's inquiries may best be given as he detailed them to Jack on his return to London.

'Well then, old man, what about Kelpiedale, eh; is it all that this old lawyer, McFadden, makes it out to be?'

'Everything, John, everything, and a wee *bit mair*.'

'What do you mean—birds all right and plenty?'

'Birds plenty, ripe and strong, and heather of the best. Black game, too.'

'And the fishing?'

'Fishing capital, more especially in the first week of September.'

'Then the lodge is uninhabitable. I though so, that I did!'

'That's it, the lodge is *uninhabitable*, but doors, windows, roofs, drains, and all are in capital order, but there's a *bogle*; in fact, *it's haunted by a ghaist*.' Captain John Morrison roared with laughter at this piece of information. Not so Bob, for Bob had less Lowland blood in his veins, and was superstitious. 'It's no laughing matter I tell ye. The place is haunted by a great

muckle ghost—the ghost of McNab, one of the old Lairds of Kelpie, who swore on his deathbed that no Sassenach would ever live peaceably in his ancestral home if the devil gave him a little furlough, and from all accounts the devil and this old Highland cut-throat were on verra friendly terms.'

'What does the last tenant say? Have you seen him?'

'I *have* seen him, and he says he would not take a thousand pounds and sleep a single night in it—in fact, as he has an action at law for wrongful suppression of information, his wife having been driven into a lunatic asylum through the sight of the bogle and the noises it made. The action will not be maintained, however.'

'What noises did it make?'

'Oh! it clankit it's chains, and moaned, and groaned, and yelled like a kelpie.'

'Would the factor take 25% off for bogle depreciation?'

'I believe he would.'

'Then I'll take Kelpiedale. I don't mind the ghost a bit if he let's me alone, but if he disturbs my sleep and makes himself disagreeable, I'll have it out with him. I'm tired of knocking about decayed prize-fighters with the gloves, and a real live ghost will just suit me. Let me see, it wants a week to the Twelfth. We'll go down together on the ninth.'

'Not me,' said Bob, 'not me. Nae Kelpiedale for me, I've heard enough of it.'

'All right, I'll go alone. Ghosts do not like company, and he might not come out. Now, I want to see this old McNab, if it's only to talk about Auld Lang Syne.'

We must now leave Jack to tell the story in his own way.

'When I got down I found everything as Bob McKillop had described it—birds plentiful, heather in full bloom and all that, the Lodge comfortable but old fashioned. If the bogle was about he gave us no indication of his presence in the daylight. I got there on the night of the ninth, as I wished to get my feet made comfortable in my new shooting boots.

'The cook and housemaid whom I had engaged I took very good care should not hear anything about the ghost at all, nor know anything about it till they or I had seen it. There was a merry twinkle in the big keeper's eyes as I said this which framed a useful hint to me in the right direction. We had no ghost on the night of the ninth at anyrate. Strolling down to the pier, I saw half-a-dozen herring-boxes labelled to a well-known whole-

sale firm in Leadenhall Market. A few fish scales were plastered over them, and all would have been right enough but for the assertion of a drunken herring fisher, who wondered who could be sending fish to London when not a single herring fin had been known in the Sound for months. There was nobody about, and as the boat was not due for some time, I got hold of a hammer and a stonemason's chisel at the big store or shop where everything is kept, from a fish-hook to a sack of flour. The lid was soon off, and there, nicely packed in heather, were twenty brace of grouse. So these were the grand Loch Fyne herrings for the Leadenhall Market. It was fortunate that I had specially sent out of the way with a message to the nearest lodge up the glen Duncanson, the keeper. Whose moor had the birds been taken from was the question? Two days before the Twelfth of August! it was certain they were not there legitimately from any honest man's ground. Five minutes with the pier master, with a threat of six months in the county jail, and I knew that Duncanson was the culprit; moreover, that he had supplied grouse in this fashion for years. It was not unlikely that Duncanson was the bogle. The grouse were clearly mine, but I did not stop their passage, though Bob said it was compounding a felony withal. They compounded my gunmaker's account at any rate. I wrote a letter to the firm, said I had taken full evidence on the spot, and unless a cheque for their full value in London on morning of the Twelfth were forwarded to my gunmaker in St. James' Street the whole would come out. They took delivery, and my gunmaker the cheque.

There was no ghost that night. On the eve of the Twelfth, however, no sooner had I dosed off to sleep than I heard strange sounds like Gaelic imprecations, with groans, and the rattle of metal. I strapped my nightshirt round my waist, leaving my arms clear, hauled on my shooting boots, got outside, and there was a terrible looking bogle, also in white. I closed up quietly, got into good position, and with my left in the chest, and another in the jaw, hit the ethereal matter so severely as almost to knock my arm out of joint. There was more Gaelic and more groaning, and the ghost actually made to turn and run. All ghosts disappear silently, but this was a Highland ghost, and wore hob-nailed boots. I was after it, and put in some substantial ones as he turned at the stair head. My shooting boots the speerit of the McNab was made acquainted with in the neighbourhood of the kilt. Some terrible rattles of my

knuckles on the ribs made me certain that this ghost was built of stouter material than most ghosts I had read about. With a farewell kick from me, and a farewell yell, the ghost ran across the lawn in the direction of the keeper's lodge.

'Next morning I was up early, No Duncanson was waiting outside to accompany me to the hill. I asked the housemaid to run out and see what was the matter. Back she came almost in hysterics, "Oh, sir, Mr. Duncanson met and foct with the ghaist, sir, that haunts this house, and is not fit to rise out of his bed." "Nonsense," I said. "Yes, but it is true, sir, for we saw the ghost, and heard it ourselves last night, and we'll not stay here another hour." I had not calculated upon this, but soon put it right. I walked down to the lodge and found Duncanson lying in bed groaning out: "Oh that bogle!" The old villain. I could not help laughing. He kept his head below the blankets. I noticed. This is a serious matter, Duncanson, I said; I must give up all idea of grouse-shooting to-day, Twelfth of August though it is, and see a Justice of the Peace and a policeman to examine into this. Indeed, I meant doing that anyway about some grouse which left here yesterday for London in herring boxes. Perhaps it would be better not to raise a noise, however, and, seeing this evil spirit does not like you, you might clear out of this place to-morrow. And he did, bag and baggage. His excuse to the factor was mine for knocking off another 25/ a-year. The poached grouse sold that year at ten shillings a brace, being the first in the market in London, and I had a new gun and all my ammunition for nothing. I had Kelpiedale for seven years, and never saw the spirit of McNab again; he could not stand shooting boots and the art of boxing.'

WAS IT PLANNED ?

By 'OLD IZAAC.'

IT was in the latter part of August, and the *venu*—as our legal friends would say—was the shore of one of the Rangely lakes, Lake Moiselacmaguntic, the home of the biggest trout of the American continent.

The scene to which I would introduce my readers was a very ordinary one in this region during the summer months. It

simply consisted of all the appurtenances, conditions, and paraphernalia of a small camp. Here were but four of us—my friend, A N. Glen, myself, and our two guides, Sabattis—Michel and Louis, father and son. The time was evening—night one might fitly call it, though it was barely eight o'clock, and we four had just devoured a mighty supper such as would drive the dyspeptic neurasthenic dwellers of cities frantic to think about. Let me give some of the items of our *menu* in the backwoods of Maine—boiled ham, pork and beans (what camp could be completely victualled without the famous Boston dish?), fried trout, tinned salmon and lobster, potatoes fried and boiled in their jackets, plum pudding, pancakes, and maple syrup, marmalade, tinned peaches and pears, and various other little delicacies of a similar nature which the Yankee 'gudewife' knows remarkably well how to collect and dispense.

Well, here we sat around the camp fire, for, though not chilly, it was pleasant to watch the embers as they glowed at every puff of wind, and, indeed, there is a charm in the camp-fire flickerings which, to the dweller in cities three parts of the year, is inexpressibly charming. Never does the oft-smoked calumet of peace bring solace and lotus eating indolence in greater perfection than after a hard day's fishing, where in the light of the camp fire the battles of the daylight are fought out afresh, and never did we four enjoy the *dolce far niente* more thoroughly than on this particular night amongst the fragrant pines of this remote region.

Our guides were splendid specimens of their race, though, as the names they owned would imply, that race was slightly mongrel. Chiefly their blood was Indian, however, and between my friend Glen and both these men there existed a strong attachment which comes of mutual respect, of trials of strength by flood and forest shared together, and of close intimacy when men are likely to be thoroughly natural. If you want to know the precise nature of your friend, don't forget to take him fishing. You will infallibly find him out.

As I said, Glen and the guides were much attached to each other, but that there was a strong bond of sympathy existing between the elder man and my friend because of a certain event which had become very valuable history to Glen, I did not know till this time. It was destined to be told me, however, and this is how it all came about.

'Michel,' said Glen suddenly, after a long silence, in which

each of us had been enjoying his own thoughts, 'what's the date of the month?'

'Guess it's the 20th, sir,' was the reply, and Sabattis turned his great dark, keen eyes with a quick gleam to Glen, which imparted more than the mere reply would convey.

'By Jove, so it is! Say, Harry, old fellow' (this to me), 'we must have a brew of whisky punch to-night. It's just ten years this very day since my wife and I put our necks in the matrimonial noose. If it hadn't been for Michel there it wouldn't have happened though—perhaps not at all. Heigho!' he yawned as he stretched his great limbs—a fine-built fellow was Glen!—'ten years go quickly by, eh, Michel?'

'They do, sir,' was the reply, half sadly, from the guide.

'That's just the yarn for a starlit night in the "forest primeval,"' said I, 'and suppose you tell me about it, Glen, that is if it is violating no confidences.'

'Well, I've no objection after you have drunk this toast, "The absent ones,"' said Glen, uncovering his curly head almost reverently.

Very heartily we responded, for each of us were blessed with 'absent ones.' Even the young Sabattis had recently taken to his bosom a wife in the shape of a plump little Canadian girl from far Ontario. He had captured this pretty bird on its flying visit to her sister living in Augusta.

'We were staying at Meacham House on the Meacham Lake, Sabattis here, and I,' began my friend, 'and I was seeking health after a severe illness from overwork' (he was a successful lawyer now, and had been a hard student) 'in hunting and fishing. Sabattis took care of me as if I were a great baby, and watched me about with the solicitude of a mother over her firstborn lest I should come to harm. Faith, I did come to harm, notwithstanding old Michel's care, for I fell in love,' with a sly glance at Sabattis. The old guide here nodded his head several times with great gravity, and blew voluminous clouds from his corn-cob pipe while my friend continued, 'Yes, sir, I fell in love with Miss Irving, notwithstanding that I was yet still without a profession, and dependent on dear old dad for every dollar, and notwithstanding that Emily was equally dependent on the rich old curmudgeon of an uncle whose tyrannical humours were obvious to all in the hotel, where they were staying for the summer months, like myself.

'I remember the first time we spoke to each other. Sabattis and I had had an unusually good day with the trout, and I

brought the big basket of splendid fellows on to the piazza, where a dozen or so of the guests were seated, and spread them out. Miss Irving admired them with the rest, and asked, "Is it difficult to catch a trout, sir?" to which I replied enthusiastically that I would be delighted to smooth the path towards her achievement of such a feat by her permission. "And you've got to obtain mine, too, young fellow," added the irascible old uncle most offensively; poor old fellow, he's dead now. I was about to retort sharply, but a certain pair of blue eyes looked appealingly, and I made no reply except to bid the party good evening, and take myself and fish off.

'Need I tell you, old fellow, that I was a gone coon over Miss Irving; pshaw! why do I call her Miss Irving—she's my wife now—and as they say love laughs at difficulties, so I contrived, as the glorious summer days went on shining, to teach Emily to cast a fly—that light rod is hers—and when once she had fairly caught and landed a fish all by herself her enthusiasm knew no bounds. The stern uncle, however, stormed, and finally threatened to take her back home if she dared to allow my escort any further. He had discovered my position and dependency, and not being a complete idiot, had seen that I was over head and ears in love. He roughly informed her he had other matrimonial views for her, and though she was of legal age and could please herself, if she did so against his will she would take the consequence and not one cent of his money. Notwithstanding this she got it all; but that is by the way.

'Well, of course, the greater the opposition the deeper did we young people fall into the overwhelming depths of love. Guess you can remember how you felt, Harry. At last the old man tackled me. I fairly and squarely told him to his face that I had no intention of giving his niece up, and I have a confused recollection that I left him in a state very nearly bordering on a frenzy. Anyhow, he called for his bill and announced his intention of starting right away. This, however, he could not do, for there were no trains and no possibility of running the stage till next day. At that time, however, he determined to go, notwithstanding my offer to "vamoose the ranche" instead.

'That evening Emily was absent from the dinner table. Thinking she was sulking over their determined return to Boston on the morrow, he did not inquire for her. He was under a wrong impression, however. Miss Irving was with me, and let the consequences be what they might, I determined that this our last evening should be an uninterrupted and a long one.

Telling Michel, here, to take the boat and try for a fish or two on his own account, that it might be thought we were out with him fishing, Emily and I strolled off for a long, delicious stroll along the lake.

'Not noticing anything very particularly, and feeling sure that we were within a few yards of the lake when we should desire to return, we walked on and on till the quick darkness that terminates the short twilight of a North American evening seemed to close round us suddenly. "We had better return," said Emily, and at once we made for the open shore of the lake, which we deemed quite near. After going straight for it for quite a hundred yards, it dawned with alarming suddenness on us that we were lost—for there was no water to be found. Hither and thither we trooped with ever recurring perplexity, but no lake could be found. An hour was thus spent till, with her dress torn and draggled, and her lovely hair loose from catching the thick brushwood branches, my poor girl covered her face with her hands and cried bitterly. The miserable truth seemed plain enough, we should have to spend the night in the woods, and after that, ye gods, the deluge! for it was impossible to prophesy with any degree of certainty whether her uncle would pistol me, or die of apoplexy after such a *contretemps*.

'After resting, we again walked on in what after a little astronomical calculation I decided to be a northerly direction. I argued that notwithstanding our divergence from the water, we could not be but a mile or two from the lake, and when that was once found, of course we could get back to the hotel. Still no result followed a couple of hours' further effort, and I was just about to give it up and find a comfortable position for my darling girl to rest in, when I heard the quark! quark! of a heron sound up amongst the trees. It had just risen from the water.

"There's the lake quite close, dearest," I said, "will you try and walk?" With a faint, tired smile Emily responded by getting up off the log on which she had been sitting, and we made for the direction in which I had heard the sound. Sure enough the broad lake met our view in a few minutes, and right across on its further shore, some two miles distant, gleamed the lights of the Marville, a township in New York State, some twelve miles from the Meacham Hotel by water, owing to the winding of the lake. What was to be done? we were just as badly off as before. The only improvement was that we knew where we were. My poor girl was utterly exhausted and faint, and added to this was the poignancy of the thought of what her

coarse old uncle would say on the morrow when we two put in an appearance. I thought and thought till I was dizzy, but I saw no way out of the confounded snarl we were in.

'So we sat there, I with my arms round my Emily, and her tired head resting on my shoulder. She had been softly crying, and was I now thought fast asleep. Presently I fancied I heard the sound of oars. "Emily," I said softly, then louder, then I gently shook her; great heavens, her head fell forward, and she would herself have fallen to the ground if I had not caught her; she had fainted with exhaustion.

'Frantically I called out to the occupant of the approaching boat, and judge my joy to hear the familiar and welcome voice of Michel Sabattis. He had purposed to do a little night fishing on his own account, knowing I did not want him, and hence his accidental appearance so far up the lake. In an instant he was by my side, and I was trying to get a few drops of whisky down my poor girl's throat. Presently I was successful, and with exceeding languor she opened her eyes. A little more of the spirits aided her to recover still further, and we presently assisted her into the boat; no sooner was she seated comfortably than she again fainted.

"Michel," said I, "it's no use trying to go back to the Hotel to-night. We must get across the lake to Marville. I know the Munson House people, and Mrs. Watson will take care of Miss Irving. Row as hard as you can," and he did.

'In half an hour I had the satisfaction of knowing that Emily was herself again, owing to the ministrations of kind Mrs. Watson, though, of course, quite unable to proceed back to the Meacham. After some cogitation I said to Sabattis, "Go back, Michel, and tell Mr. Irving how this has happened, and say that we will meet him at Boston, at his house, the day after to-morrow." Michel stared. "I mean just what I say," I said; "now go."

"Guess yer do, Master Bertie," said he; "well"—with a twinkle in his eye that I can recall yet, with all its slyness—"guess I'll take a drink, wishing *you and Mrs. Glen long life and happiness* afore I goes. By jiminy, won't the old 'un blaze up?"

'Did Mr. Irving blaze up?' I asked, turning to Sabattis, who sat solemnly gazing into the remains of the fire.

'Yer kin bet yer sweet life he did, sir,' was his answer. 'It wer kind o' sulphury in that Hotel fur weeks arter thet time. I told him, and he made fur me as ef I'd run away with his darter instead er Mas'r Bert here. I found as I hadn't got enny bizness

thereabouts putty soon arter I'd delivered my message, and so I left by the next conveyance, which wer the old bark canoe. He! he! he! chuckled the old man.

'Well, to finish off,' continued Glen, 'this romance of real life. I was up betimes next morning, and waited on the Rev. Dr. Platt, of Marville, and without much difficulty I arranged to interview him at ten o'clock. I hadn't arranged with the party on the second part, but I calculated that that appointment would be kept nevertheless. In York State, you know—or perhaps you don't know, being an Englishman—you can wake the parson up in the middle of the night and he can legally marry you out of his bedroom window if he likes; so, after breakfast, I used various arguments to convince Emily that there is no time like the present for all good deeds, and finally she agreed to be a party to the appointment I had made with the Rev. Dr. Platt. Half an hour afterwards we emerged from his sanctum man and wife, and he himself richer by the trifling fee of a twenty dollar gold piece.

'Did we go to Boston to meet the stern guardian? why guess we did, but we didn't hurry. On the contrary, we sent him our certificate of marriage, and Emily wrote for her luggage to be forwarded to the Meacham Hotel, where we returned and spent a famous honeymoon. Why, sir, we were literally mobbed by sympathising ladies, and caressed and patted out of all belief. It was worth all the trouble to hear the expressions of delight that escaped from everybody at our little *coup d'état*. Of course nobody believed I hadn't planned it all——

'By Jove, Michel Sabattis, I'll knock your brains out if you smile like that again. You know I didn't plan it, you thief.'

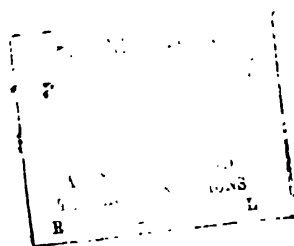
A CLOSE CALL.

By WILF POCKLINGTON.

THE camp fire was blazing brightly in front of the tent, which stood in an opening of a small thicket of trees and undergrowth on the edge of a Western prairie. There was little air stirring, and the smoke ascended almost perfectly straight into the atmosphere, where it seemed to dissolve and mingle with the purer ether, leaving no trace behind, as though it had ascended to the stars, that

I Thied the tree





blinked and scintillated in their countless thousands, miles upon miles overhead ; ascended, indeed, as incense did in the old days when pagans worshipped the Sun God and his satellites with a purer religion than degenerate moderns dream of.

The fitful yellow blaze of the pine knots lit up the surrounding trees, throwing half the trunks into a dense shadow, and bringing each gnarled knot and hollow into prominence ; above, the leaves fluttered nervously, as if the old fauns and elves were still dancing in their midst, struggling to draw them out of the circle of fierce heat that scorched their undersides, and cracked their sapless veins. The tent stood half in light, half in shade, and, stretched out in front of the fire, half a dozen men lay chatting and smoking before turning in for the night. Out in the open not a sound was heard except the ceaseless chirp of the grasshoppers and tree toads awakened by the gleam of the fire, the sudden 'buzz' or hoarse screech of a night hawk, or the peculiar wailing bark of a coyote sitting just out of the circle of light, hungrily licking his lean cruel jaws, waiting for us to sleep and the fire to burn down, that he might come sneaking in, like the pitiful cur he is, to snatch some bone or relic of our last meal, and darting out to the open, devour it alone, snapping and snarling at the sound of his own teeth, fearing it betokened something come to dispute ownership with him. Occasionally two of the brutes met, and with a sidelong motion passed each other, jumping at each other's throat with a snarl, but always stopping half way, and passing on with mutual distrust.

Suddenly a deeper note sounded, and their snapping and snarling ceased as if by magic. Jim Webster ('Dead Shot Jim,' as he was called in the West) raised his head quickly. 'That's a panther, boys, see how those curs crowd together at the very sound of his roar. Well! I don't blame them so much for wanting to keep clear of him; a panther is a devil incarnate. See here!' tearing open his shirt bosom, 'you see those scars; well, that was the closest call ever mortal man had, and did not pass in his checks in answer to it.'

'Tell us about it, Jim. Where did it happen?' asked one of the party, lazily filling his pipe.

The guide stretched his long, gaunt, sinewy figure out into a more easy position, his momentary excitement died away, and his voice resumed the monotonous drawl that the New Englander contracts at birth and never afterwards loses, no

matter where he may roam. We found afterwards that the sight or sound of a panther was about the only thing that had the power to quicken the phlegmatic speech of this best and pluckiest of Western hunters.

'All right, Colonel, if you say tell the story everything goes. It was about four years ago, I was out in California, prospecting, hunting, and one thing or another, looking after pelts and bounties at the same time. I was passing along the edge of a deep gulch with my two dogs, looking for a place to get across, and some way down I spied a log laying right across the chasm. The dogs were running around loose, I was not taking much notice of them just then, when suddenly one of them gave tongue, the other took up the challenge, into the scrub they went before I could call them off, and the next I saw of them was when they crossed that log like a flash of greased lightning. Now I knew that nothing but a panther could make them break from me like that, and I forgave them because of the bounty I would get for the ears. When I had made my way down to the log I found they had treed the brute on the far side, where I would have to cross to reach it. I tried the tree and found it all-fired shaky and did not much like to trust to it, but over I had to get somehow, and so I started in, going very slowly, for the log was quite slippery, as well as not over strong, or well fixed. The dogs had ceased giving tongue when I came into view, but I had not got more than half way across the bridge before they commenced again more fiercely than ever. I thought perhaps the animal had seen me coming and was making an attempt to get away before I came up, and feeling kinder curious in the matter I just steadied myself and looked up into the tree. What I saw I'll never forget. Great Scott! I've seen a good many panthers before that one, and killed not a few, but the one I saw looking at me from the branches of that oak was bigger and fiercer than any I had ever seen or heard tell of. He lay crouched on a branch about midway to the top of the oak, and glared at me with eyes like fire. As soon as my eyes met his, he ceased paying any attention to the dogs, but riveted his gaze on me, uttering low deep growls, and swaying his long tail to and fro in angry, jerking sweeps, which told me I had no time to lose, but must ack quickly, as the crazy varmint was preparing to spring. As you may guess, an insecure, slippery

tree trunk, over a deep gorge, was not the best possible place to exchange unceremonious greeting with a cuss of that sort, but I had no time to help myself, and saw I was going to have a close acquaintance pushed on me, whether I wanted it or not. Getting a good kneehold, and bracing myself as well as I could on the slippery trunk, I raised my rifle to my shoulder, and aimed for the middle of the brute's head. Just as I pressed the trigger a piece of rotten bark that I was standing on gave way, and I slipped at the very moment when my rifle was discharged. Instinctively I caught at a bough to save myself, and in doing so let the empty gun slip from my hand and go clattering to the rocks below, and I would have followed it if I had not luckily fallen astride of the trunk. I knew the panther would not hesitate to follow up his advantage, and drew my hunting knife as soon as I could get my hand on it. Fortunately for me I was so spry, for I had barely unsheathed it, when the animal, with a terrific yell of mingled rage and pain, bounded from his perch, heedless of the dogs, and landed on the ground not three feet from the end of the log on which I was sitting. The ball from my rifle had made a slight wound on the animal's head, and the blood ran down into his eyes, making him look terrible and infuriating him to madness. His eyes were still fastened on me, and, old hunter as I was, gave me a sort of creepy sensation, for I knew his dander was away up, and that his next bound would land him within a foot or two of where I sat.

'Where were my two loyal dogs all this time? Well now, they weren't idle, but they were kind of astonished at such barefaced, deliberate cussedness, and hesitated for an instant before they closed in with him. That momentary hesitation was what he had calculated on, for it just gave him time to leap forward to where he sat. He made a mistake, however, if he thought it would also give him time to leap a second time to me, for they closed with him at once. He turned with a flash, and with a yell of defiance knocked one pup such a terrible blow with his paw which sent him spinning into the gulch and so to the river below. The other dog had got a grip on one of the panther's legs behind and hung on gamely, and the next instant they were rolling on the ground in a struggle for the mastery.

'The huge beast threw up clouds of dust and earth, and dead leaves with his sharp claws, and for a few minutes both combatants were lost to view in the dust. It seemed a long

while to me, for I dare not move forward lest the struggle should end and I be taken unawares, whereas I was fairly well placed to receive the inevitable charge.

'I suppose the fight lasted about half a minute, and then through the settling dust cloud I saw the poor dog in the panther's jaws. The jaws came together, I heard the bones crack, and in another moment the limp body of my second dog was thrown to the ground. The panther was now fighting mad, and would have charged an army; he gave me one look, then he gritted his teeth and tore the body of the dead dog around, then he looked at me again, working himself up, until I felt I could not stand the suspense much longer, and should have to take a leading hand.

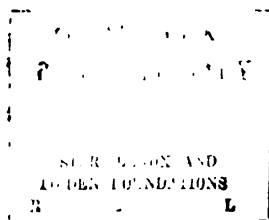
'As soon as he saw me move he gave his head a shake, as if to clear the blood out of his eyes, opened his mouth and gave a yell that nearly froze my blood, and crouched for a spring. I grasped my knife with my right hand, and steadying myself with my left, I waited for the inevitable shock.

'It came. The long, lithe body flashed through the air, and the next moment I was sitting face to face with the brute, his hot, fetid breath literally fanning my face. I gave him no time for preliminaries, but met him half way, leaning quickly forward and plunging the keen blade once, twice, into his neck. The hot blood spurted into my face and filled my eyes, and as I drew my hand across to clear them I dimly saw the brute rise in the air, and the next moment the long, sharp nails of the two paws sank into my chest. I felt the talons, hot as molten lead, sinking, tearing into my bosom, and leaning forward in an agony of desperation I plunged my knife well home behind the shoulder, and as I did so the brute seized my right arm in its mouth and compelled me to loose my hold on the knife. I felt my brain whirling, and as the devilish blood instinct that is in us all rose to the surface and made me determined to sell my life dearly, I closed my arms around the brute, seized his throat with my teeth, and locked in a death embrace we swayed to and fro, until we swung under the log, held up only by the grip of my legs. Little by little they relaxed, and we fell, still inseparable, to the rocks below.

'The sun was far down the horizon when I recovered consciousness. I was not seriously hurt, except for loss of blood, for in the fall we struck a large bush, and brought it



He gave me one look



along with us to the bottom. The great beast was dead, my knife had just scraped his heart, and I had actually bitten his throat out in that mad death struggle. I never hear one howl now without a cold shiver down my back.'

Jim arose and shook himself. 'Good night, folks,' he said, and turned in, while the rest soon followed.

The fire burned lower and lower; a grey shadow stole furtively across the open, carefully keeping the dying embers between it and the tent as long as it could. A sudden snap at a bone and it vanished. Another came and another—a sound of snarling and fighting arose at intervals, and all was still. The morning sun arose, but no vestige of the dead coyote Jim shot before he went to bed, bones, food, empty fruit cans, or egg shells, remained. The prairie scavengers had been at their work, and it was well done.

NOTES ON NOVELTIES.



PATRONS of the sport of Steeplechasing are again to be congratulated on the opportunity of possessing four admirably coloured Engravings, depicting their much-loved and truly fascinating sport. They are from the pencil of Mr. A. C. Havell, and are in every way worthy of his increasing reputation as a painter of horses and sporting subjects. Equally clever are they, although very different in character and treatment, to the series, to which attention has recently been drawn, by Mr. John Beer, whose fresh and artistic pictorialization of every description of sport is gaining in popularity 'by leaps and bounds.' The present series presents us with views of the courses of *Sandown*, *Manchester*, *Warwick*, and *Liverpool*. In the first plate is seen the competitors jumping a fence, '*The First Time Round*' in all the freshness of commencing a contest. Full of suggestion and originally treated is the leader, who is shown in the difficult position of starting off again at the moment of landing. '*A Refusal*,' at the water opposite the Grand Stand at Manchester, makes a telling incident very skilfully depicted. Equally picturesque is '*At the Bend*,' Warwick, and as well thought out as portrayed are the positions and actions of the horses. '*The Water Jump*,' at Liverpool, closes the series, and is as full of interest, dash, and 'go' as the other three.

An exceedingly interesting article by H. R. Everitt appears in the last list issued by Messrs. Chamberlin & Smith, of Norwich. It is entitled *From Shell to Shot*, and is a chat about Pheasants. In a walk round with a Head Keeper, one is treated to some knowing remarks on feeding, covert, and management, with description of Pheasant catchers or traps. His method of handling poachers is original and very amusing, besides being highly instructive; but perhaps the most important part of the paper is that devoted to Hatching and Rearing, which precedes the explanation of the various methods of Shooting Pheasants.

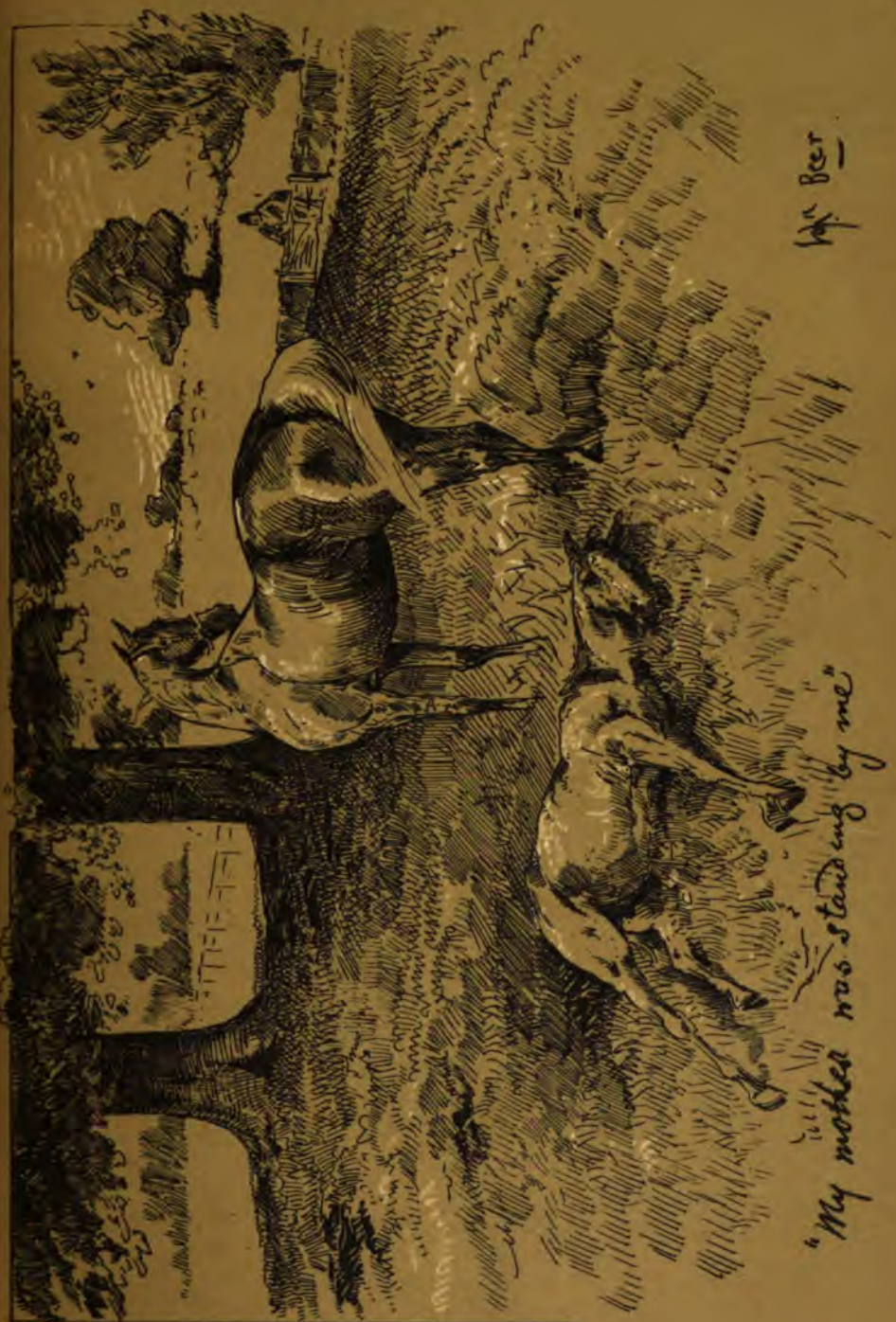
The Sports and Athletic Club, established at 8 St. James' Square, S.W., is calculated to fill a vacancy in Clubland, and from its constitution and aims can hardly fail to become popular. It will not only attract the lovers and patrons of every description and variety of home sport, but will become a centre and rallying point for Colonial and Foreign Sportsmen. Besides the social advantages of such a Club it is proposed to establish, in connection therewith, an agency for collecting and tabulating information concerning sport in all parts of the world; also to keep for the use of members a register of sporting properties, Shooting, Fishing, &c., for sale or hire.

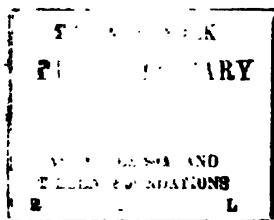
Purchasers of horses have no doubt occasionally felt the loss of a work of reference when they have been puzzled by the appearance of a horse's mouth. This difficulty may now be overcome by procuring a *Pocket Guide to the Age of the Horse*, with twenty coloured plates, by Charles Schwab, and published by Sampson Low, Marston, & Co.

Wheelmen who object to a wetting should have fitted to their machines the new *Cycling Umbrella*, which also acts as a sunshade; and as, by the aid of a ball and socket joint, it can be angled to any position, it is claimed to be a 'speed accelerator.' When not in use it can be closed and angled forward, and thus out of the way. There is little doubt it will be invaluable to ladies; and, as the numbers of fair cyclists are increasing year by year, there will probably be a great demand for this useful invention. The patentees are J. and J. P. Cochrane, Leith, N.B.

W. Ber

"My mother was standing by me"





FORES'S SPORTING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

A DARK HORSE.

By SIR RANDAL H. ROBERTS, Bart.

Author of '*In the Shires*,' '*Curb and Snaffle*,' '*Hard Held*,' '*High Flyer Hall*,' '*Ridge and Furrow*,' &c.)

PART I.—*From the Diary of a Colt.*

MY first recollections date from when I was about three months old. I was lying on my side on a hot day in July in a rich grass paddock, and my mother was standing by me whisking the flies off her sleek sides with her long tail, and watching the white wicket that led into the paddock. A beautiful creature my mother was—a bright chestnut—and the hot July sun shining upon her coat made it look like burnished gold. Presently she gave a whinny and trotted off to the wicket, where I saw a stout man with very thin legs standing and leaning over the gate on his arms. I got up, stretched myself, and followed her. When I came up the stout man was feeding my mother with something out of his pocket, and talking to her.

'Well, old gal, how are we this morning?' I heard him say in a gruff voice, to which my mother answered by rubbing her head against his shoulder; after looking at me for a few minutes he left, and my mother stood watching him, then she turned away and walked down the paddock, whilst I frisked and gambolled round her.

The next thing I remember, some months after, and one that I shall not easily forget, was the stout man coming into the paddock accompanied by another man, who held in one hand a thing I had never seen before, and in the other a vessel which he shook as he approached, and my mother

soon had her nose in it and was munching the contents. Then he handed the stout man what he held in his other hand, and the latter approached me, for by this time I had become very great friends with him, and I used to allow him to pat and stroke me. Suddenly, before I knew what he was doing, he had slipped something over my head, which I at first resented, but as it did me no injury I submitted. Whilst he gently patted me, he tried to pull my ears, but to this I demurred, and kicking up my heels in the air I galloped off. Then I tried to rub off against my fore legs what he had put on my head, but it was no good, and so I gave it up and rejoined my mother who smelt at it. About a month after this we were taken into the straw-yard, for the weather was getting cold, and a loose box was prepared. Finally, when the Spring came, and with it the warm sunshine, we returned to the paddock. By this time I had grown and become quite stout. I was, like my mother, a bright chestnut with a white blaze down my forehead, and a white stocking on my off hind leg. There were other colts in the paddock, but I could gallop faster than any of them when we were at play. Then the time came when I was separated from my mother, which caused me much pain and uneasiness and made me refuse my food, for which I seemed to have no appetite; but as time went on I soon forgot, and as I was particularly good tempered and had always been well treated and petted, I took to my biting and saddling quite naturally. I was very much astonished when a weight was put up on my back in the shape of a small boy, who patted my neck and spoke kindly to me, whilst the stout man led me out of the stable, and I found myself on a nice soft track.

‘Keep him walking, Jim, and don’t mess his mouth about or ill-treat him,’ said the stout man, as he watched me move away.

At length, when I was eighteen months old, I found myself on a wide expanse of ground, which I heard called the Curragh of Kildare. Here, in company with other colts, I used to gallop and canter, always with the same boy on my back, who looked after me with the greatest kindness. He never shouted or swore at me, and I became so attached to him that I allowed him to clean me without resenting, only occasionally snapping in fun when he tickled me.

One day when I was at exercise and we were all walking in a string, a tall, handsome-looking man, attended by the stout

old man came up, and we all stood still. Then I was turned away from the string and the rest went on.

'This is the colt, my Lord,' I heard the latter say. 'He's by your Lordship's Bundy out of Sunlight, and he's about the best youngster I've got in my stable. We call him Ratafia, because he's very fond of those little sweet cakes. Take him along a bit Jim and let his Lordship see him move.' As I passed at a good swinging gallop I heard the man he called his Lordship say:—

'He's a grand mover, Jago, and if he goes on well he ought to win a race. I don't often speculate, but this time I think I've got a good colt. He's entered for the Nursery Plate in the June Meeting, and barring accidents I think he'll about win.'

I afterwards learned that the tall gentleman was the Marquis of W——, and that the short stout man with the thin legs was Jago the trainer.

PART II.—*From the Trainer's Diary.*

I'd just come in from exercise, had a good wash, and was sitting in the parlour waiting for breakfast and reading the paper, when Mary came in and said there was a gentleman wanted to see me. It was pretty early, and a trainer who's got a good many horses in training has got to look out for touts and their like.

'What kind of a looking man is he, Mary?'

'Looks like one of the soldier officers from the camp, sir.'

'What, at this time in the morning? Just ask the gentleman to give you his card.' Mary went away and returned with the card, and I read, 'Major Renton, 100th Hussars.' So I thought for a moment and then, putting on my hat, went out. Dismounted and leaning against his horse's side, I saw a tall dark man, very well dressed, and looking, as Mary said, like an officer. When he saw me he passed his arm through the horse's bridle and came towards me.

'Mr. Jago, I believe?'

'Yes, sir. What can I do for you?'

'Well, if you will let one of your lads walk my horse up and down, I should like to have a few minutes' chat with you.'

I'm not a bad hand at taking a man's measure when I once run my eye over him, so I rung the bell, and, giving his horse in charge to a lad, I at once asked him to step in. When we entered my parlour I said: 'Rather early, Major. Can I offer you some breakfast?'

'Thanks very much. I am a little early, and shall be glad of a bite if I don't disturb you. As we've no early parade, having a field day at two to-day, and as my business is pressing, I thought I'd just canter over.'

The breakfast came in and the Major's appetite was quite as good as he said. I watched him narrowly, and finally made up my mind I had nothing to fear. Breakfast over, we lit cigars and then he began.

'What I came to see you about, Mr. Jago, is this. I've got a match on, weight for age, with a man for 200*l*. a side; Anglesy Post. The origin of the match is simple: I'm a pretty good billiard player, and having won a fair stake and drunk a good deal of brandy and soda on the top of champagne and claret, I got a little above myself. My man, who had got the needle, did not like it at all, so the end of it was, we made the match I spoke of and here are the conditions. He handed me a paper which read as follows:—

MATCH £200 ASIDE; HALF FORFEIT.

'Major Renton agrees to make a Match with the Hon^{ble} Richard Short for £200; half forfeit. Weight for age; distance Anglesy Post; one calendar month from the signing of this agreement; both horses to be the absolute property of the undersigned; judge, starter, and umpire to be mutually agreed upon; and the match to be run on the Curragh course at an hour to be named by the referee.

'(Signed) R. SHORT.

'A. RENTON.'

'Well, sir, that seems all right. I suppose you want me to look after your horse; is that it?' said I, handing him back the paper.

'Not a bit of it; fact is, I've made a match do you see; made it under the circumstances I told you, when I was excited, and—and—you know—and I haven't got a horse, at least, not fit for this business; so I thought I'd come over and see if I couldn't make a deal with you, as I can't afford to lose this match, d'ye see, for various reasons.'

A thought flashed through my brain at once, and I replied, 'Well, Major, I don't see how I can help you, I'm a trainer, not a dealer. I——'

'Oh, yes! I know; but then a trainer has always got one or two he can part with. Can't you help me? Haven't you got a young un that's never run (I don't suppose his will be a flyer, and most likely he's at the same game as I am); a young one, for it's "weight for age" you'll remember.'

'Well, sir, I'll think over it,' only there's just one question. Supposing I do this, are you going to stick to the horse after the race, win or lose?'

'No, sir, the horse is yours after the race for the price I pay you—and what is more, I leave the matter in your hands, and I don't want to see the animal even till the day of the race. I trust to you as an honest man—which I've always heard you were—and will take all chances. What's the figure?'

This staggered me. It had run through my mind whilst he was talking, here was a chance for the Bundy colt to extend himself without the bother of a trial; and if he was beat I was to have him back again at the same price paid. Yes, I would do it.

After a little haggling, I said I thought I had one would suit, and asked 400 guineas. To my astonishment out came the Major's cheque book, and in a few seconds I held the cheque in my hand.

'Now, Major, you'd better have a look at what you've bought.'

'Not I. Give me another cigar and I'll get back to camp, only let me know from time to time how the animal gets on, that's all. A thousand thanks, Mr. Jago; good bye,' and the Major cantered off. I never was more astonished in the whole course of my life. I stood watching his retreating figure thinking over the conversation and holding the cheque in my hand. Rum go this! What's best to be done? The colt must be kept dark, that's certain. How to do it? Then an idea struck me. Yes, that would work. I'll ride over and see Muldoon; I can trust him.

* * * * *

This morning at daylight the Bundy colt, with young Jim in charge, left for Muldoon's, and no one in the stable was a bit the wiser.

PART III.—*Extract from Miss Anna Beaumont's diary.*

JUST got a letter from Arthur, poor dear, he tells me everything; all his troubles and all that he is pleased to call his misdeeds. I suppose men have to amuse themselves, and billiards is a game they most of them play; besides, he says he didn't lose. The only thing I don't quite understand is about the match with this horrid man. Arthur hasn't got any race-horses, and he only rides in Regimental races. He says he'll

come over to lunch to-morrow. I suppose I must wait until I see him, and then, bless his dear heart, I know he'll tell me all about it. It's such a comfort to think that the man you love has no secrets from you. I suppose he can't get out of this match, and if Papa hears about it, with his inveterate dislike to horseracing, we shall be worse off than ever. Never mind, time is going on, and I shall soon be of age—and then—and then ; ah !

* * * * *

Arthur came to lunch, and we were quite alone ! for Papa went to Dublin, and won't be back before dinner. I am not at all happy about Arthur's news. He says he's bought a horse, and it's being trained. He called it a dark horse ; I suppose he means it's black. Then he says he shall back it to win him 5000*l.*, and if he wins, he shall sell out, and with what income he has we shall be able to be married, and Papa can't object. I'm not quite sure about that. He was in high spirits—the only thing I can't make out is why he hasn't seen the horse ? I asked him, and he said he must keep him dark, and not let any one know, and that he will hear all about him from time to time, and that a few days before the race he'd drive me over to see it. I don't like this betting business, but Arthur put it in such a dear way that I could say nothing. Papa has just returned, and the servants have told him Arthur lunched with me ; he was very grumpy, and said he did not approve of fast young men. As if Arthur was fast ! Then he said Arthur came here too much, and that he hoped I was not making a fool of myself. I don't care ; Arthur loves me and I love him, and no one shall part us.

* * * * *

I've been with Arthur to see the horse ; such a lovely chestnut. It is at a queer old man's farm called Muldoon. I saw it gallop with another horse much older than itself, and it came in first, a long way ahead. Arthur was delighted. There was another man there called Jago, I heard him tell Arthur that the other horse must be a flyer to beat his. I shan't be able to sleep or eat, it's only two days to the match ; just fancy the happiness of my life depending on a horse !

From Major Arthur Renton's diary.

I've found out at last that Short's horse is, as I expected, a two-year-old by Saccharometer ; of course, there's great excitement in the regiment, every one wants to know where my horse



Mc Bee

with us we went and saw the trial

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is, and if they ought to back it. Short has told the bookies he's sure to win; what chance has a soldier against such an experienced racing man as he is, he says; evidently the bookies think they've got a soft thing; I don't, as Jago tells me the colt, which he calls Biscuit (beastly name), is a flyer. The bookies have written me, and I've taken fives, fours, and threes to one. If it comes off I shall land 6000*l*. Then good-bye to soldiering, and my darling Nan and I will be married. I got a letter from Jago saying he was going to try the colt the day after to-morrow. Have written to Nan to tell her to meet me outside the lodge gates, and I'll take her with me.

We went and saw the trial, and I quite agree with Jago. I saw the weights were all right, and the trial horse was a clinking four-year-old; they went seven furlongs, and Biscuit won as he liked without exertion. Short may find out I'm not such a flat as he takes me for. It seems they all know about Short's colt, but they're quite in the dark about mine. After the trial I told the fellows in the regiment I thought I was sure to win, but the best market I could get was 5 to 4. I shan't hedge a shilling.

Well, the race is over, and I'm the happiest man in England. Saccharometer colt jumped off with a lead, which he increased after they'd gone one furlong to about two lengths. Then I saw little Jim, who rode Biscuit, sitting as if he were carved in stone, altho' the colt was pulling him over his withers, give him his head; at two furlongs they were neck and neck, the chestnut pulling double. Poor little Jim, will he be able to hold him? At the five furlongs I saw Jim take as good a pull as he could and steady the colt, whilst the black shot a length to the front. Half a furlong from home the black was in trouble, though struggling gamely; then Jem sat down and gave the Biscuit his head, the chestnut shot away as if the other was standing still, and won by fifteen lengths. We had to lift little Jim out of the saddle, he was so done. Short's face, never a pleasant one, was diabolical; the weights were all right, and I've won my wife, and from the day we are married I'll never make a bet on a horse or take a cue in my hand, for this is my compact with Nan. Jago whispered to me, 'Major, that black colt's a three-year-old, don't say anything; I'll tell you why, some day.' 'Good gracious me, you don't mean to say the chestnut?' 'The chestnut is all right, here's his birth certificate and registry, the other's a wrong 'un, and so is Mr. Short.' After my marriage I went to the June Meeting at the Curragh, and there I could have

sworn I saw Biscuit win the Nursery Plate in a canter, and yet it could not be Biscuit, for this colt was called Ratafia, and he had a white blaze down his forehead, and a white fetlock joint. Biscuit was a whole chestnut without a white hair—curious, wasn't it. That was the last I saw of my dark horse.

DUTCHMAN'S GOLF.

By E. L. A.



FOR real hard exercise there is no season of the year equal to the winter, and of all forms of exercise, its devotees at least are confident that golf takes the palm. Unfortunately it is impossible for every one to live within practical distance of established links or to enjoy the membership of a regular club; yet even with these disadvantages a modified form of the game can be played which is practically unknown in England at the present time. It possesses the excitement of a cross-country run, with all the peculiar fascination of the great Scottish pastime; it affords opportunities for the strongest exertion and the nicest skill, and can be played with equal enjoyment by Tommy fresh from school and Tommy's grandpapa, aye, and pleasanter still, by Tommy's sisters and cousins, and even his aunts.

I was initiated into its mysteries in this way. We were a jolly party of golfers staying at a country house on the borders of the Hampshire downs: we had all been playing a good deal during the last few months, and were full of the remembrance of great deeds done or the visions of others to come. We had the implements of our craft with us, and we varied our tall talk in the billiard-room of portentous drives and awe-inspiring bunkers safely overcome, by the practising of imaginary strokes in every vacant corner we could find about the house. We had everything, in fact, that makes life worth living to the golfer except, alas! a course to play on.

This unsatisfactory state of things reached a climax one day when there was a lull for the moment in the constant round of fishing, shooting, and hunting in which we had been indulging, and our forlorn condition in the matter of a green was borne in upon us by a fine afternoon and a spell of enforced idleness. There had already been one or two suggestions amongst the

most restless of our number of making a temporary course on the smooth turf of the great downs which we could just see from the library windows, swelling away in undulating ridges between the dark barriers of the fir plantations. But the more conventional members ran the project down, damning it with feeble praise and that phalanx of despondent 'ifs' which saps the initiative of any resolution save the most robust. A course, they said, was not to be made in a day ; the mere planning out of it would take time, and the formalities of obtaining permission from a Lord of the Manor somewhat negative in the quality of his public spirit would take more ; we had not got a hole-cutter, and to make putting greens even on the short upland sward would require a month's work with the mowing machine at least, &c. &c. So the enthusiasts shrugged their shoulders and the case looked more hopeless than ever. Then a diversion was caused by one of them who possessed the great twin virtues of speaking seldom and always to the point.

'When I was in Flanders ——,' he began in his quiet, impassive way.

'Then you swore horribly I suppose,' interrupted a flippant member of the party.

'When I was in Flanders last winter,' continued the first speaker with unruffled calmness, 'we played golf all day, in every weather, and wherever there happened to be a piece of open land, without regard to whether it were a links or not.'

'Good !' was the general chorus ; 'let us go at once to Flanders !'

However, a fair hearing was soon obtained for the speaker, and he proceeded to unfold for us a new fashion in the great game, which took our fancy at once ; in fact, it sounded so good and plausible that it was decided to put it to the trial forthwith, and after a little preliminary discussion we donned our coats and leggings, and having impressed half a dozen stable boys for 'caddies' to carry our implements, we set off in the full glow of newborn enthusiasm.

As we trudged up the wide Saxon 'way,' with its great Bramble banks on either side and short grass extending from hedge to hedge, and saw the fieldfares drop from the hazel clumps on either hand and flit chattering up the road upon the field edge, our monitor unfolded his plan to us. First of all we were to divide ourselves into sides, and here at once appeared an advantage of the new game, for it was shown that as long as the

'sides' were equal any number of individuals could play. Then, when after a little haggling we had settled this matter, our guide, philosopher, and friend bid us appoint from each party one member—a good, ready-witted player he ought to be—to represent our interests with the hostile group, and, as it turned out afterwards when the game developed, to thwart *theirs* as much as possible. This also was done, and shortly afterwards we passed through a fine barrier wall of pines, in whose swaying green tops the little red squirrels were chattering and frolicking, and found ourselves on the open downs with the great cool breath of boundless upland pastures, as sweet and uncontaminated as the breath of the First Morning must have been ere men had polluted the world, fanning our faces.

'Now!' said he of Flanders, wielding a niblick as though it were a marshal's baton, and sweeping his eye over the horizon, 'we will take this mound here to the right as our first tee——'

'Good Heavens!' cried the irrepressible interrupter; 'why it is twenty feet high if it is an inch, and no mortal club could knock a ball off the top of that.'

'Nevertheless,' continued the guide in his blandest manner, 'we will take it for the first tee.' And leading us to the green summit of one of those isolated British grave places with which these Hampshire downs are dotted, he continued. 'Gentlemen! here is your starting place, and I think I may suggest as a fit and appropriate goal the porch of the Luxwood Arms, which lies about three miles out yonder over that second rise between the coppices.' Then, utterly disregarding the gasps of wonder which broke from some of his hearers as they measured the portentous distance separating 'the hole' from their tee, he added, 'The rules of the game are simple, gentlemen. Each party is to consider itself a gigantic foursome playing upon a green whose limits stretch nearly to the horizon. As in real golf, so in this, the great object is to hole out in the fewest number of strokes, and the side accomplishing so much wins the game. Each division plays independently of the other—indeed, it commonly happens the rival bodies are out of sight most of the time—each member taking his turn, and the functions of the 'Incubus' who follows, *i.e.*, the emissary from the hostile camp whose presence the rules oblige you to submit to, much as you may loathe his methods and execrate his personality, are two. He has firstly to keep your general scores for the satisfaction of his own side; and secondly, whenever

his turn comes round in due course, it is his invidious duty to drive the single ball you play with as far back over the path you have just laboriously trodden as his strength and ability permit ! Or, if it seems best to him, he may send it into any such reasonable bunkers as may lie convenient to his malice. Thick woods, water, or heavy gorse do not come within such a category, and the ordinary rules regarding unplayable hazards are observed. This is all that is necessary just now to show you the essential of the game, and so, if you are ready, we will begin.'

Well, we did. The first man put a ball down artistically upon a little nob of earth, and taking a glance at the spire of Luxwood village church, a mere black point upon the winter sky line, and heaving a heavy sigh as he mentally speculated on the distance, he made his drive—a good one down the slope and over the short upland grass—of over two hundred yards. Then the opposite party struck off, their ball lying two score yards to the left of ours. We both walked forward and played again, stroke succeeding to stroke until the exigencies of warfare and the necessity of avoiding chance obstacles had worked a space of a quarter of a mile or more between ourselves and our rivals, with whom, to the end of the contest, we had no further communication.

It was the first demonstration of the 'incubus' which really roused the interest of the game in our eyes. Our previous man having incautiously left the ball nicely placed on some short grass, the 'incubus' worked his will upon it, sending the 'putty' flying backwards again into the heart of some coarse, brambly ground, upon the skilful avoidance of which we had just been loudly congratulating ourselves. It took two shots to get out of that trap, and it was now most interesting to see the solicitude of the man who played next after 'our friend the enemy'—that we should keep a long drive away from every kind of hazard, and the extreme skill and forethought we began to display in circumventing the aforesaid enemy's wiles.

Over the open grassy downs we went, with the bright light of a delightful winter day in our eyes and the sweet savour of numberless miles of peat and bracken and pine in our nostrils. The little grey conies sat up on their tails on the hillocks, and as soon as they found those glittering things we carried were not from Rigby's or Holland's or Boss's, offered long odds one to another on the fortunes of this or that drive ; the golden leaves of the aspens were 'shaking their whispering silver to the

sun' until it twinkled like golden spangles; the new-come missel-thrushes in the dense cover of the junipers were retailing scandal about the blackbirds in the yellow gorse patches, and beyond these nearer things the great sweep of the waste lands spread out green and purple on every hand, stately, and silent, and ancient, just as it had been since the beginning, with the tall plumes of the firs nodding over the dark shadows that covered the resting mounds of Celt and Cymri, and the glitter of shallow water a long way in the distance looking like the sunlight on spears as Tosti or Cæsar crossed over to raid and punish the 'west-men.' Even for the sake of the walk it was worth while exploring regions of which too few know anything, while the zest of the game, from which I now and then stole an appreciative glance around, made it doubly enjoyable.

All the best points of golf, with the single exception of the delicate operation of putting, were brought out in turn as we drove the white ball stroke after stroke across those miles of delightful turf. Now we were up on a ridge with the glorious vistas of free country around us and a footing below as soft and close as a Belgravian carpet, and then we were down in a parlous hollow where the December water was lying everywhere at the roots of the sedge grass, and the brown partridges were running like rabbits in the tracks between the heavy seeded rushes. Another stroke, perhaps, took us into dangerous proximity with the hazel copses, and another, well lofted, carried the ball over a couple of grey stone walls and an upland road almost into the lap of an astonished shepherd who was dreaming, after his bread and cheese luncheon, of a distant Phillis in the lowlands, and was still too bewildered to be coherent when we came up and mildly asked him the distance to our goal.

And numberless were the difficulties our own incapacity and the evil machinations of our scorer got us into. Between us we put the ball under dykes and into stone heaps, amongst brambles and fern patches, deep down into peat holes, and high up in the forks of blackthorns. We drove, and baffed, and fozzled, and got hopelessly bunkered, and came out again with flying colours all to our hearts' content, as stroke by stroke that spire broadened out upon our sky line, developing oriels and gables, and gargoyles and belfry, as we stealthily approached it.

At last we were within touch of the straggling hamlet, with a clear sight of the village green with its geese flocks, and beyond, delightfully suggestive of well-earned tankards, the white inn we

had been aiming for so patiently. Here our rivals 'developed,' muddy but jolly, out of a wilderness of blackthorn and bramble, and together we skirmished into the upland hamlet, and after I had scientifically lofted our ball over a huge waggon of thrashed straw, and one of the other side had planted an ambitious drive full into the rear of an unhappy pig, a couple more of well-directed shots rolled our balls into the sanded bar of 'The Plough,' and left my own division the winners by half a dozen strokes.

It need not be told how good our host's 'October' seemed after such a walk, or how, by acclamation, and in recompense for their ill deeds, we decided to torture and kill the two 'scorers,' and were only bought off from carrying out a horrible revenge upon them then and there by each standing another drink all round. But in one thing we were all agreed, that failing a regular course and all the satisfaction of well-kept greens, &c., a manner of the great game can be played, in the 'wilderness,' which, given a fine day and pleasant company, though it may be second-class golf, is yet first-class fun.

THE MAN BEHIND.

By 'LEATHERHUNTER.'

NO doubt to all who read my lines the fact is fully patent,
That sport in every English breast is evident or latent ;
It only wants the calling forth, and so with Jemmy Procter,
When he came up to 'London town' and saw the famous 'Doctor'
The 'willow' wield with seeming ease, and never heeding whether
The 'trundler' bowled to 'off' or 'on,' still send the crimson leather
Like billiard ball, o'er verdant baize, hard hit but seldom rising,
The way he kept them down, to Jemmy Procter was surprising,
For Jem was strong, and down at home he hit some wondrous fliers.
But there the likeness ended quite, for *his* were mostly 'skiers,'
Some interfering fielder oft got hands 'tween turf and leather ;
The umpire then cried 'Chuck it up,' and gave him no more tether.
'Twas galling, and the promenade 'to tent' was simply boring,
'Just when a fellow felt in form to do no end of scoring.'
So Jemmy mused, and wondered how the 'Doctor' did his 'driving,'
To keep the ball upon the green so constantly contriving ;
'They all go up when I let out,' said he, 'and that's the reason
I've never got the "average bat" at close of any season.'
A man stood near who hailed from where the tide of Trent is rolling,
He seemed to quite appreciate the treatment of the bowling.

'Well cut,' cried he, as W. G. sent one 'twixt slip and 'cover,'
 And clapped his hands when Grace made ten in Attewell's next over ;
 They're frank, you know, at Nottingham ; though 'lacemen' lose a
 wicket,

They never care a barleycorn so long as it's good cricket.
 Now Englishmen will fraternise upon the ocean billow,
 And in the ring when gathered round to watch the whirling willow,
 But not in trains, at covert sides. Oh, no ! there'd be a ruction
 If any one addressed a man without an introduction.

At length said Jem, 'Excuse me, sir, I'd like some information,
 How this big Gloucester cricketer, the "crack" of all our nation,
 Can hit so hard and "place" his ball, despite the captain's cunning ;
 It mostly seems, whene'er he bats, the Gloucester men keep running.'

'Well now,' replies the man from Trent, 'I'll tell you all about it,
 He uses Sloggar's patent bat, and couldn't do without it ;
 Four inches from the bottom end old Sloggar makes them thicker,
 And that's what makes his patent bat hit harder and hit quicker.'

'Oh, that's the reason !' Jemmy cried ; 'I'm bigger and I'm stronger,
 You bet your bottom dollar if I chance to live much longer,
 I'll buy a Sloggar's patent bat, and then the Gloucester hero
 Shall find his name and eke his fame for scoring near to zero.'

The 'Notts' man was a wag, you see, and poking fun at Procter,
 You'll trust a 'lamb' who comes to Lord's to know about the 'Doctor.'
 But Jemmy bought the bat the same, and took the field elated,
 Anticipating figures three ; but Jem, alas ! was fated,

To find the leather, when he played, was still an awful soarer,
 And Jem, with Sloggar's patent bat, was still a meagre scorer.

'Caught Jones,' 'Caught Brown,' the score-sheet said, and so through
 all the season,

He couldn't make a decent score and couldn't tell the reason ;
 'Twas very aggravating to a man of such ambition,
 Who'd been to 'Lord's' and 'learnt the ropes,' to be in that position.

One day poor Jemmy's cup was full ; he got an awful 'floozer'
 When 'Caught long off !' the verdict was, no trouble to the scorer,
 And Jemmy swore, disconsolate, the Notts man was a swindle,
 For match by match his hopes of fame seemed constantly to dwindle ;
 But finally he met that man, a veteran in cricket,


As Jemmy was retiring, just as usual, from his wicket.

'Whatever do you mean ?' cries Jem ; 'for by the holy piper
 You told me Sloggar's bats were safe to handle for a swiper.'

'Quite so,' replies the man of Trent, 'the bats are famous drivers,
 But don't you see the trundlers are as famous as contrivers,
 To make the ball go up from blade by setting it a "spinning" ;"
 So if perchance you're extra bent a cricket match on winning,
 Just take my tip—as time goes on you're bound the truth to find it—
 There's less depends on bat or gun than on the man behind it.'

A MODEL BOXER.

By 'ONE WHO KNEW HIM.'


 HERE have been a great many professors of the noble art of self-defence at one time or another, but I question very much if any one of them could boast of such a numerous and aristocratic *clientèle*, year after year, as the hardy old veteran who called himself 'Young Reed,' and who, on the 18th of May last, departed this life for what the immortal Mrs. Gamp was pleased to term the 'walley of the shadder.'

Born in Ireland in 1820, William Griffiths—to give him his proper name—came over here at an early age, and at once adopted pugilism as a profession. Probably the fact of his being brother-in-law to the celebrated Alec Reid, the 'Chelsea Snob,' had something to do with his choice. At all events that worthy brought the young Irishman out, so to speak, his protégé adopting his mentor's name as a *nom de guerre*, with the slight difference that he spelt it with two e's instead of one. His battles in the ring were but few, and in all of them he seems to have come off victorious, with the exception of one with Paddy Gill, his defeat being attributable to the fact that he had to give too much weight away.

His last and most important fight was in 1846 with Jemmy Massey, one of the best and gamest 'bantams' that ever threw his castor in the ring. He was a bit too good for the subject of this memoir, and the latter at last resorted to getting to ground in order to avoid punishment, a practice very common in those days. Massey, enraged at this, lost his temper at last, and in the sixty-first round, hitting his man whilst on his knees, the fight was given against him, otherwise he must have won.

His lucky antagonist was already well known as an instructor of boxing, his classes being held at Owen Swift's in Tichborne Street, and he now made up his mind to abandon the ring altogether, and devote his entire time for the future to giving instruction in the noble art—a line of life for which no one was better qualified than himself, his general conduct and behaviour being irreproachable—very different to that of pugilists in general—and his science very much above the average. Young Reed, in short, played his cards remarkably

well, and it is not to be wondered at, therefore, that a school-master with such undeniable qualifications should soon secure plenty of pupils, and those of the very best.

For a long while he was with Jem Burn, at whose house, the Rising Sun, in Air Street, he held his classes, and it is not until the year 1867, or thereabouts, that we find him with an establishment of his own. This was situated in Lower John Street, Golden Square, and there he remained until his death in May last. His industry was remarkable, and the man must have been literally as hard as nails to have got through the day's work as he did. His hours at his rooms—or rather room, for he had but one—were supposed to be from eleven in the morning until seven at night, but in reality his day's work commenced long before that, he every morning visiting several pupils at their own homes, who, employed all day in the City, perhaps, and consequently unable to spare the time during the day, were obliged to take their favourite exercise before having started. As their instructor lived at Putney, it stands to reason that he must have risen betimes of a morning. Indeed, it may safely be said that from seven in the morning until seven at night, Reed was never for a moment idle.

A more temperate man never breathed, to which fact may probably be attributed his capacity for hard work. Spirits I don't believe he ever touched; if he did indulge at any time at the invitation of a pupil, a glass of port wine was his favourite tipple. Sundays the same. On Sunday afternoon he would, he told me, indulge in a quiet cigar after dinner, and that lasted him until the day of rest came round again.

Needless to say he was very full of anecdote; the mention of such names as Lords Waldegrave and Drumlanrig, 'Billy' Duff, and the Honourable Robert Grimston, being quite enough to set him going at score. One of the adornments of his *atelier* was a print entitled "'Slender Billy's' Studio," the scene of which was Captain Duff's room in the Fleet Prison, where that celebrated practical joker was incarcerated for grievously assaulting a policeman of that period, the apartment being hung round with door knockers, sign boards, and other trophies collected by their eccentric owner, whilst in the foreground, indulging in a friendly spar, were the occupant of the room himself, otherwise 'Slender Billy,' and his friend, Lord Waldegrave, who, if I recollect rightly, was detained in durance vile for participating in the same offence as his friend.

The Professor, when taking his walks abroad, was invariably attired in a complete suit of black, and certainly no one looking at him would ever have connected that highly-respectable, white-haired old gentleman in any way with the P. R. He was quite aware of this, and kept up the illusion as much as possible. One dark night, he informed me, he was set on in the street by three roughs, who meant robbing him.

'I think,' observed the Professor with a grin, 'they took me for a *clergyman*, sir. They very soon found out their mistake, I can assure you. I hit 'em about so hard that two of 'em bolted very soon. The third one couldn't get away, and after punching him until I was tired, I knocked him down and fell on him. Then the police came, and I handed him over to them.'

The Professor was never tired of expatiating on the benefits to be derived from boxing from a health point of view. 'Ah! you want work, sir,' he would say. 'Come to me every day for an hour, sir, and you'll soon be all right. An old pupil of mine, sir, who had given up boxing owing to getting married, called on me one day, sir. "It's a very odd thing, Reed," says he, "but here have I been married getting on now for five years and yet there's no family nor any signs of one." "You come to me, sir," said I, "and spar, and do some hard work with the dumb-bells, the same as you used, and you'll soon have a family, never fear." Well, sir, Mr. ——— took my advice, and during his stay in town he used to come here and spar every morning regular, same as usual. He was a capital boxer, sir, Mr. ———.

'And now comes the odd part of it, sir. Just a year afterwards the bell rings, and in walks Mr. ———. Quite excited he was. "Do you know," said he, shaking his fist at me, "that I've a deuced good mind never to speak to you again." "Why, what's the matter now, sir?" says I "aint there no family yet, sir?" "Family!" says he, "I should rather think there was a family! What do you think of *twins* for a beginning? It's all your fault, Reed, confound you!" But *he* wasn't angry, sir, it was all make believe. He was as pleased as Punch in reality, and we went over to the Bodega close by, after we'd had the usual spar, and drank the twins' health in a bottle of champagne.

As I have said, Young Reed could boast of an unusually aristocratic *clientèle*—the sons of the Marquis of Salisbury, for instance, whom he used to visit periodically at Hatfield. The Duke of Leeds, too, was a constant patron of his to the last, and the Professor never tired of extolling his Grace's powers of

endurance, meaning the number of times consecutively he would hit out with the dumbbells, and his prowess as a boxer.

He gave it as his opinion that out and out the best amateur he ever had the gloves on with, and certainly the hardest hitter, was Mr. Powell, so well known in Leicestershire in former days as 'Timber' Powell.

Mr. Charlie Buller was very pretty to look at, he said, but there wasn't the amount of 'powder' behind his blows that he liked to see.

The very last time the writer had a chat with the veteran was a day or two after the great Jackson and Slavin fight at the National Sporting Club. He had but a poor opinion of the modern school as fighters in the old style, and gave it as his emphatic opinion that Tom Sayers and Jem Mace in their prime would have made mincemeat of the lot.

The Professor did such a lot of hard work of a day that one would have thought that when he had a chance he would have rested a bit. I was surprised, therefore, not many years ago, on calling at his place in John Street, one afternoon out of the season, to find the old man having a turn with the dumbbells on his own account. 'Just to keep myself *fit*, sir!' So lithe and active was he right up to the last that one could easily have imagined the old boxer living to a hundred. But it was not to be; a sudden chill laid him low at last, and, after a very brief struggle for existence with King Death, the latter conquered, and, to use the phraseology of the P.R., the sponge had to be thrown up for 'Young' Reed, at the age of 73.

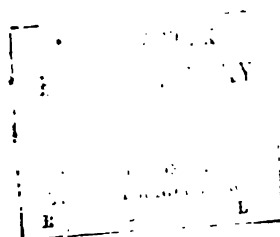
Apart from his pretensions as a scientific boxer, which were of a very high order, his style being quite perfection to look at, his quickness in 'getting away' almost imperceptibly after planting a blow being astonishing, it is not too much to say that 'Young' Reed, by his integrity, modest bearing, and uniform good conduct, during a long and blameless career, set an example that members of his calling of the present day would indeed do well to imitate.

One secret of 'Young' Reed's great popularity with his pupils was, I fancy, the diplomatic way in which he instilled into the mind of each that he was an undeniable performer with the gloves. I have looked on many a time with great amusement at some stout gentleman running after him all over the room, the perspiration coming from him in streams in his futile endeavours to carry out his mentor's instructions to hit him.



John Young

Young Reed (cop) "Now hit me, Sir!"
(easier said than done)



At last he would pull up, thoroughly exhausted. Then would the ruthless Professor, without letting him rest a second, place a dumbbell in each hand, saying, as he did so, in his most insinuating manner,—


‘Ah, sir! you box capital; all you want is a little work. Hit out two hundred, sir, please.’

Then he would anoint one at the end of the lesson with some wonderful oil he had (‘made from a recipe given me by the celebrated “Gentleman” Jackson, sir’)—rather an expensive luxury that oil was, I remember. Finally the pupil would walk off, feeling invigorated and refreshed, with the appetite and drinketite of a tiger, and on the best possible terms with himself, for does not ‘Young’ Reed’s formula ring in his ears?—

‘You box capital, sir; all you want is a little more work.’

BROADWAY AND THE BERKELEY HOUNDS.

By ‘PECKWATER.’

OME forty years ago, when the Lord Fitzhardinge of that day used to bring his hounds to Cheltenham in alternate months, the Saturday fixtures were invariably at or near Broadway, where the pack would be kennelled on the Friday evening, the ‘Old Peer,’ as the country folk used to style him, and his friends making the ‘Lygon Arms,’ kept then by Host Drury, his headquarters.

What life and excitement these weekly visits instilled into the dull and monotonous existence of the villagers, the chief event in whose daily experience would ordinarily be centred in the arrival and departure of the old ‘Sovereign’ coach morning and afternoon to and from Oxford and Worcester.

Poor Tom Liley, the cheeriest and best of coachmen, used to keep his hunter at Moreton-in-the-Marsh, and, as he left the box there about ten each morning, he would have ample time to enjoy a gallop with Jem Hills from Chapel House, Boulter’s Barn, and other meets, before taking the ribands again on the return journey from Oxford in the afternoon. Yes, in those days the only news that reached these out-of-the-way towns and villages would be conveyed by the old mails and stage coaches, and in the bar parlour of the ‘Lygon Arms’ a well-known set would be

found anxiously awaiting the arrival of the 'Sovereign,' for whom Tom Liley would have some special intelligence, or the last new joke he had heard from 'those Oxford boys' he had met that morning with Lord Redesdale's hounds. His Lordship was always glad to see 'the lads' come galloping up to his fixtures on their covert hacks, and would often give them ten minutes' law when a long distance from Oxford had to be covered, their hunters having been sent on over night to old Jolly's stables at Eustone or to Chapel House, as most convenient for the morning's fixture.

A word in season from Lord Redesdale would at once restrain any youthful ardour within due limits, or, if the meet was nearer to Oxford, and his field seemed likely to give him trouble, Jem Hills would gallop away with his hounds to some more distant covert, find his fox, and be away before the crowd of thrusters knew what he was up to. 'A capital burst wasn't it?' some inexperienced youngster would exclaim, after such a gallop, to the amusement of those who were aware of the old 'un's tactics.

But, when these Broadway Saturdays came round, the little village would be alive with sportsmen from the country far and near, for no greater treat could they enjoy than a day with Harry Ayris and the Berkeley pack.

When one looks back and tries to recall the well-remembered forms of those who, both at the covert side and when hounds were flying like a flock of pigeons over the open stone-wall country, were to be spotted at once as sportsmen to the backbone, the memory dwells vividly on the welter weights of that day, and the names of Marriott, Dr. Tom Smith of Broadway, Crowther of Somerville Aston, and the present Squire of Petworth, or, as we then knew him by his familiar title of 'Tom' Shekell, are on our lips.

When a younger and lighter man, and mounted on 'Rosebud'—Dick Pulestone's steeple-chase mare—few would be in front of 'Tom Shekell' when hounds ran fast; then, later on, when sixteen stone would be wanted to turn the scale, those well-bred weight carriers he delighted in, were equally at home over the Cotswold Hills as in the vale with the Warwickshire, the Worcestershire, or the Duc d'Aumale's harriers.

There was one, a white-legged bay horse by the Prime Warden, bought from the Wilsons of Ilmington, whose pace and fencing powers under a heavy weight were something to be

remembered. To see this horse trot up to a five-foot wall, pop over, and trot away the other side, was simply delightful, and one of those neat performances of which a thorough workman is alone capable. Then, a chestnut horse by Mr. Vever's 'Safeguard,' by 'Defence,' was another that combined breeding and quality with the ability to carry weight, ay, and to gallop under it in the front rank; this horse was as clever over a cramped country as he was bold in the open, and H. H. Stephenson, when he hunted the Duc d'Aumale's harriers, thought at first that it was a rare good thing to have Mr. Shekell on his chestnut as a pilot; but, when he found how partial his leader was to an awkward stile or a rail in a weak place in a fence, particularly towards the corner of a field, he found it safer to choose a line for himself. But perhaps the very best man of that day to get to the end of a run, and to be with hounds from start to finish, taking a clear line of his own, was the late Mr. Frank Holland of Crophorne. With his son Corbett, now the well-known veteran, Holland Corbett, he was to be seen at all the meets far and near. A nice 'broth of a boy' was this youngster; a favourite with every one, he was seldom at fault for a mount, and was not particular whether it was a hunter in condition or a farmer's rough three-year old, so that he could be there. With his horse clean pumped out, he was once known to tie him to a gate and see what he could of the finish on foot, much to the amusement of those who had still some little 'go' left in them.

Besides these, there was Mr. Higford Griffiths, of Campden, who often had some nice young horses from Herefordshire and Shropshire, while the cloth was represented in true orthodox style by dear old Parson Port, chaplain to the Lord Ellenborough of that date. Then that fine old sportsman, Dr. Davies of Pershore, held no distance too long to keep him from the enjoyment of a Broadway Saturday. Such as these were the sportsmen of the old school one used to love to meet, but now we can only dwell on the past with reflection sobered, while the lines of the poet give expression to our feelings:—

'When time, that takes our hours away,
Shall steal our pleasure too,
The memory of the past will stay
And half our joys renew.'

And again, when we think of those jovial Cotswold Hill

farmers, whose hospitality and good fellowship we delighted in, we can safely assert that a better set of men never placed foot upon the soil of any county. Those who remember such representatives of their class as Cook of Taddington, the Marshalls, and the Fletchers, will bear me out that the bulk of them were quite equal to this sample. Long life and more power we heartily wish may fall to the lot of their descendants in these evil days, and we feel almost thankful that their fathers have been spared the troubles which have gathered round their old homesteads, and which, if not relieved by some almost miraculous agency, will inevitably spell the ruin of old England.

And now for a few words to recall the hero of our schoolboy days, and summon before the mind's eye the qualities of the man of whom no one was ever heard to speak a word but what was good and to his credit, for such can truly be said of Harry Ayris, the Berkeley huntsman. Here was a man beloved by every one; his merits as a huntsman no one has ever questioned, and to descant on them now would be like 'gilding refined gold.'

From the first moment you saw him at the covert side you felt him to be a perfect master of his craft, you knew also intuitively that you would see hounds handled in such a way as you had not seen before, such confidence did he seem to inspire, while his firm but courteous treatment of his field instantly commanded respect and obedience. Then, when sport was over and the day's work done, when 'Harry' came in to drink a glass of port, you would hear such a graphic account of the working of his pack and of the features of the run you had enjoyed, as no special commissioner from Nimrod downwards, has ever been able to reproduce on paper.

After a year or two of these experiences the scene changes from the old school to 'Alma Mater,' and then Jem Hills and Jack Goddard confirm the young ideas and aspirations, and show one what sport is under different methods and conditions from those we have been considering. It was strange that two such celebrities as Hills and Ayris should have been contemporaries in adjoining counties, and it was only natural that a friendly and good-humoured rivalry should have sprung up between them.

It used to be great fun to meet Jem Hills after a local steeple-chase meeting, say, at Witney or Charlbury; he would then be in grand form, and that was the time to draw him

out. The Druid speaks of Jem Hills' jokes against Ayris and his squir'l (squirrel) hunting, but he does not relate how Harry was able to turn the tables on him. On one occasion Jem had asked his neighbour how he got on squirrel-catching, referring to the habit the Berkeley foxes in some parts had acquired of taking to trees.

'Oh, about as nicely as you seem to do running bob-tailed sheepdogs in Wychwood Forest,' Harry replied, with a twinkle of his keen bright eye.

'Brand your old hide! who told you this?' was Jem's discomfited answer.

It was a sore point, for it was reported that in the last cubbing the Heythrop had dusted a bobtail for some twenty minutes in fine style in the forest, and their quarry had only saved his jacket by bolting through the window of a woodman's cottage. Such was the legend, and Harry managed to score this time and no mistake.

Touching this propensity of the Berkeley foxes to take to trees squirrel fashion, we had on one memorable occasion a painful experience. The meet was at Broadway village, but the 'Peer' did not feel well enough to come out that day. He, however, sent for Ayris and told him to let his favourite hound ('Manager,' I think, was his name), who always lived in his room, have a run with the pack that morning. This hound was highly prized by both his Lordship and Ayris, and as a sire had proved himself of high reputation. After a short run the fox took to a large pollard oak at Middle Hill, and for a time defied all efforts to dislodge him. The hounds were all baying round the tree when a noted colt-breaker of Broadway, Tustin by name, got off his horse and led him slap into the middle of the pack. The result may be imagined; this raw colt kicked out, and the hound he caught was no other than the favourite priceless 'Manager,' whose thigh he broke. Here was a nice mess! Ayris was like a man distracted.

'Who will dare to go and tell his Lordship?' at length he cried; 'and to think of you,' turning to the culprit, 'who have been with hounds all your life, to bring a colt among them like this!'

The scene was a most distressing one, the poor hound looked reproachfully at his master, as much as to say: 'After all my services, why am I treated like this?' Well, the upshot of it all was that Harry's second horseman and a countryman carried

the hound down to Broadway in a smock frock, litterwise, and a veterinary surgeon from Blockley went with them, and in the Peer's presence managed to set the broken limb in such a skilful way that 'Manager' in a few weeks was nearly himself again. It is needless to add that when the Peer was out with the pack master Tustin gave him a wide berth. He at once asked who was the cause of the accident, and, when he heard the offender's name he was all the more enraged, as in this man's case there was no excuse to be urged for such behaviour.

But, really, the most perfect day I ever enjoyed with the Berkeley hounds was the first occasion on which, as a schoolboy, I made my first appearance at Broadway. I was then about sixteen, and at home in Worcestershire for my Christmas holidays. I had been promoted this time to the dignity of riding a conditioned hunter, and after the first day or two had got on the best of terms with my mount. Some schoolfellows, whose home was not far from Broadway, had always been boasting about their hunting with the Berkeley hounds, and telling me I did not know what hunting was until I had seen this famous pack, so I got leave to avail myself of their invitation to have a day with them.

'We will find you a horse, and if you get to Worcester in time for the "Sovereign" coach, which leaves at 7 o'clock in the morning, we will meet you at the "Northwick Arms," Evesham, at 9.30, and we will have the horse there ready for you . . . ' one of them wrote, and it is needless to say that I was at the coach office in Worcester half an hour before the time of starting, for I had hardly slept a wink in my excited anticipations of the morrow's glory. At Evesham my schoolfellows were ready mounted to receive me, but, instead of a hunter in full condition and equipment waiting for me, I saw a man holding a rough, varmint-looking galloway about 14.2 high. Here was a pretty let-down! their own horse had fallen lame, so they had hired for me a colt-breaker's nag, which they said was a rare good one to go, altho' a rough one to look at. He evidently had had plenty of work and was in hard condition, but to make my first appearance in such a field under these conditions was a grievous disappointment, and for a few minutes I was grumpy enough. 'I shall only be able to trot about the roads,' I thought; as for facing a stone wall (which I had never seen by the bye) on a brute like this, I felt it to be out of the question. I was not judge enough to notice that 'this brute,' as I styled him mentally,

had all the make and length of a horse a hand higher; but, as we jogged along, and after a good lunch at the 'Lygon Arms,' my spirits rose and I had forgotten my troubles.

'Mind you keep out of Lord Fitzhardinge's way, and don't ride at a wall anywhere near him,' was a special injunction I received.

'Not much fear of my being anywhere near him,' I thought, and so we rode along to Weston Park.

I was told to watch when the Peer drives up and gets down from his carriage, and it certainly was a sight to see the hounds rush to him on his arrival, and notice how eager each one was to try and show his fondness for their grand old Master.

The Weston Park coverts always held a fox, and in a few minutes a rare bold one was away, making for the vale below. My pony, as I called him, without by your leave or any appeal to my wishes, at once took me in the right direction and over several fences in a style that astonished me, then we got into a grass vale, and soon some willow trees warned me that a brook was in front. Several of the leaders I could see had safely negotiated it, but as I got near I saw that it was a very formidable-looking obstacle, and I was ashamed afterwards to confess that I funk'd it utterly, and did all in my power to turn off to a bridge I could see lower down.

I was close to the bank when I had succeeded in pulling my pony round, and as I did so I cannoned with an old man who was going at the water full tilt, and this was no other than old Sam Darling of Bourton on the Hill, the rider of 'Rockingham,' winner of the St. Leger, and in later years of old 'Isaac,' the winner of every race of note in the Midland Counties. I can see him now with his one eye closed as he came niggling along, and didn't he just give me a grandfather's blessing! However, I heard 'Don't funk like that!' from a voice I knew was Dr. Tom Smith's; so I turned the pony's head and followed him over the water in style, and vowed to myself I would turn from nothing more that day. And I did not.

I had lost some little ground by this manœuvre of mine, but a check at a lane let me up. The fence into it was a nasty awkward one with a deep drop, and men were riding up and down trying for a place, when hounds hit off the line, and without notice my pony took me straight through the straggling thorns and down the bank like a cat. Now was my opportunity, a stretch of light plough land was in front of us, fenced with

stone walls. Hounds were racing with a burning scent, and only two hard-riding farmers and myself were any way near them. To my delight my pony held his own place with ease, and then came my first wall. I rushed the pony at it without trying to collect him, and he, not being used to take stone walls in this way, just hit the coping stones, and landed head and knees in the next field; I, thanks to the pony's grand forehead, just saving myself from going slap over his ears. We were soon up and in our stride again. 'Don't go so fast at the next one; let him dwell a bit,' one of my next neighbours called out to me. I followed his advice, and for some three or four miles I was carried to perfection.

Here was a chance for a keen eager lad, my fondest dreams were now being realised; my pony had the stride of a horse, and under my light weight simply seemed to romp along. No one was near the hounds except we three, for by the time that awkward lane had been passed by the rest of the field, hounds were half a mile ahead, so they made best pace along the lane pointing for a large gorse covert which the fox was evidently bent on reaching. But before gaining this hoped-for refuge he was so hardly pressed that he was glad to go to ground in a field drain, where the hounds marked him, affording us a welcome halt, for the pace had begun to tell, and another field or two might have reduced our swinging gallop to a sober trot. Our fox was soon bolted from his sanctuary, and right into the middle of the pack he seemed to rush. It appeared all over with him; but a dexterous dodge or two landed him safe in a rough hedgerow, through which hounds followed with difficulty, and he was away again with another chance for his brush, and this, after a ten minutes 'spin' he managed to save by taking to a drain under a farmer's house, from which it was pronounced impossible to dislodge him.

We did not draw again, and on our way home I noticed two or three examining my pony most closely. I had got quite fond of him now, and declared I would come up the next Saturday and ride him once more; but before that day arrived I had a note to say that his owner had sold him for twice the sum he had been asking, and we did not meet again. I returned home overjoyed with my Broadway experiences, and when, in the week after, I was fortunate enough to get to the end of a run, which our veteran sportman, Mr. John Watson, of Waresley, chronicled in his hunting diary as one of the best ever ridden to in Worcester-

shire, extending as it did from Churchill, near Spetchley, to Hewell Grange, I felt I had had more than the ordinary luck that falls in the way of a schoolboy. Often afterwards I passed through Broadway Village, sometimes riding down from Oxford on the 'Sovereign' coach, and the last time I drove down we had the narrowest possible shave from a smash, for in the first length of this hill, which runs on a zigzag for a mile and a half or more, the drag chain snapped, and the heavily loaded coach was nearly over; it righted itself, however, and then came the trial of nerve and skill which happily landed us safely at the bottom. No wheelers, of course, could hold back such a weight, and the only thing to do was to keep them up to their collars and chance the rest. We overshot our hostel, the 'Lygon Arms,' by some two or three hundred yards, for it was only when the flat was reached that the team could be got in hand; indeed, the bystanders thought we were going to take the next stage to Evesham without changing horses; so, when all circumstances had been explained, it was agreed we had had a narrow squeak, and that it was only owing to our coachman's skill and courage that we were safely at the bottom, instead of being 'crumpled up' on Broadway Hill.

AMONGST THE PARTRIDGES.

By A. HERON.



AD, indeed, would be the day which saw the extinction of our little russet-coloured, homely bird, the partridge. For, apart from the sport which he annually affords to so many thousands of people, he is a very cheery, confiding, little bird; and, despite all the 'harrying' and 'bullying,' which he year by year receives at our hands, so soon as the shooting season is over, and he is left alone, he is ever ready to 'shake hands,' and forgive and forget all about the previous bad treatment which he has undergone, and to again prepare to make his home with us.

Poor little birds! I often think it is a shame that they should be so 'set upon' and 'hammered at' as they are. Their very good qualities are the cause of their troubles. How dull and 'wanting' our English farm lands would seem without them and their well-known call of 't'zck, t'zck,' as they gather their families

together for their evening meal in the stubble! Nor do I think that there is a better bird to eat than a partridge. Only, in mercy, let him be roasted—cooked with the honours of war—and not stifled and tainted in an oven.

The cook who can bake game ought to be condemned to wear a badge of disgrace in her Sunday bonnet; and the man who can prefer to eat it so cooked, is unworthy of possessing a good cook. He must, indeed, have been badly 'brought up:' such an utter want of taste is unworthy of an English gentleman. Our American cousins may do as they please. Baked game may do for Republicans, but it won't do for us!

I wonder who was the author of the well-known lines regarding the relative merits of the partridge and woodcock? So many people are able to quote the two first lines of the verse, and so few are able to finish it, that I think I may as well give them. They run thus:—

'If a partridge had but a woodcock's thigh,
It would be the best bird that ever did fly;
If a woodcock had but a partridge's breast,
The woodcock then would be the best.'

When repeating these lines to a friend, some time ago, he actually had the audacity to dispute the correctness of my quotation, and assured me that a woodcock had no thigh. 'Great Scott!' I replied, 'where *were* you born? Have you never read the *Ingoldsby Legends*? do you not remember "The thigh of a woodcock served on toast?" Wherefore do you suppose I took the trouble to show you how to draw the sinew from the leg of that "cock" you "fluked" down at the corner of the "Low Copse" last autumn? You are a heathen man, and "a truly hopeless sinner."' Nevertheless, the author of the lines referred to has adroitly avoided bestowing the palm of merit on either bird. Doubtless, in his opinion, both were excellent of their kind, and we may rest assured that 'he knew,' and could appreciate both.

Where should we be if the preachers of the 'Land and game for the people' theory were to have their way? One thing is very certain, and that is, that there would very soon be no game in the country at all—no partridges, no pheasants, no rabbits, no—hares, I was going to add, but of these last-named, there are already few enough as it is, and ere long (unless something is done) a hare will be as great a rarity as a 'golden eagle,' and the man who is fortunate enough to secure one will be pointed out admiringly, as 'the man who shot a hare last season,' &c.

But to return to our *perdix*—*Perdix Cinerea*, as he is called. What exemplary parents partridges are! Ever ready to incur any risks for the sake of the young brood, even to feigning being wounded. While riding along the road, last summer, I came across a covey, dusting themselves. As I approached, and they saw me, it was piteous to witness the agony of fear the hen bird was in, as the poor little chicks ran 'cheeping' after their mother, scarcely able to keep pace with her. I waited, in order to give her time to collect them, which she succeeded in doing, with the exception of one poor helpless little mite, which foolishly got the wrong side of the road. Ere long, however, he, too, managed to join the rest of the family. Such jolly little beggars they are, too. I thought myself a hard-hearted brute, when I reflected that, in the course of a few weeks, I should be doing my best to compass the destruction perhaps of these very birds. I often wonder if on the 31st of August partridges are aware of the dangers which threaten them the next day. It may be that the old hen bird remembers how, the previous year, she and a brother so narrowly escaped being shot, and how for days they were separated from the rest of the family—at least, from the few who had survived that fateful day,—and how eventually nearly all of the rest were killed; she herself lost one of her toes, and took refuge on a neighbouring farm, where she met her husband, who, like herself, had only got off, as it were, 'by the skin of his beak.' 'Oh! it was a dreadful, dreadful time!' It was just about this time of year, too, and the moon, as now, was at its full; and though the days were hot, the nights were just a little chilly, and they were all huddled up together in the long grass under the sheltered side of the field—this very field, and within a yard or two of this very spot. Ah! well, perhaps it won't happen again, and with this reflection she tries to go to sleep, but somehow or other she is restless, and does not feel comfortable. That new corn she had for supper was not quite as digestible as it might have been, and the moonlight is a little too glaring to be pleasant. The other side of the hedge will, perhaps, be the better, after all, and to-morrow night she will shift their bedroom over there. Poor old lady, to-morrow night you will be probably swinging by the neck on a nail in the larder, and your family—such of them as may be left—will be lamenting your loss, and, likely enough, that of several more of the warm little group around you now.

They say that 'there is nothing so bad but that it might be

worse,' so take comfort in the knowledge that you belong to the Squire, and that he is a good sportsman, and a clean, good shot. There is no bungling or wounding with *him*. What he shoots at is clean killed. None of his birds are runners, and his party are nearly all of them good shots too. He hates to see birds going away with their legs broken, and, generous though he is in his invitations to shoot, he will never ask a 'muff' to shoot with him a second time. Had you been reared on the Marquis's estate, you would have stood every chance of being butchered to death. He and his friends are the worst shots you can imagine. They all drink too hard to shoot well, and are gambling half the night, and when they do get up in the morning, their nerves are in such a state, that the very 'whirr' of a covey upsets them, and they fire into the 'brown' of it, and half the birds get peppered.

There will be only four guns here to-morrow, the Squire, his two sons, and the Parson. The latter is a good shot, too, and if it so happens that you or yours fall to his lot to take away with him, you may be sure that he will say a 'grace' over you, and that is a deal more than you would get up at the castle, where you might be gobbled up by the butler. So you are, at all events, better off than the partridges up there. It may be a very fine thing to travel up to London, with a label on your neck, 'From the Marquis of Goldengoose,' but it is better to stick to the Squire or the Parson, and after all, even they may not come your way, and, if you are lucky, and manage well, you may, if they do, succeed in escaping altogether; but you must keep your head clear, and use your legs as well as your wings.

I suppose that there is a language amongst birds? There is, most indubitably, one amongst bees and ants. Any one who has watched their habits closely cannot doubt the fact, and I can see no reason why the intelligence of birds should be lower than that of insects. If birds don't talk, what then is the meaning of all the chattering which takes place amongst the rooks and starlings? I wonder what sort of conversation takes place amongst partridges and pheasants after a day's shooting? There must be loud lamentations, and it's dreadful to think of the amount of suffering inflicted by bad shots.

The 1st of September, however, must and will be kept. The calendar tells us that partridge shooting is to begin on that day, and if it does not, what on earth is the good of the calendar? The 1st of September without partridge shooting would be no

1st of September at all. Consequently, if we don't shoot partridges on that day, it can't be the 1st, and the calendar must be wrong as far as we are concerned, and the year will lose a day. At all events, I am going to shoot with my old friend Bob Straight, and we are sure to have a good day. We always do, over his land. He told me that there will be the same party as usual, to wit, the Major, the Doctor, he and I. Bob is as good a shot as any man I know, the Doctor is nearly as good, the Major, when his liver is all right, is by no means bad, and for myself, well, I suppose I may as well except present company. Anyhow, Bob likes me to go, and I like going, and we are all old friends, and enjoy each other's society, and never shoot jealously. Even the Major, at his very worst, only swears at himself, and shies his cartridges about. It does nobody any harm, and does him 'all sorts' of good. When his liver is at all wrong, he can't hit a thing till he has had a good 'swear,' and then he is all right.

Sure enough, we all turn up at the appointed time ; even the Doctor has managed to get away early on this occasion. How he does enjoy a day's shooting, and he is such a good fellow, too. Everybody loves him. Bob always asks him to shoot, but he can't always get away. Last year he lost half the day, because Mrs. Buckwheat chose to add to the population just as he was preparing to start. This year, however, she has managed her affairs in a more satisfactory manner, and little Buckwheat No. 4 made his bow to the public a fortnight ago. I don't think that there ever was such a neighbourhood as ours, for all the children elect to be born on the very days on which they are not wanted. If we ask the Doctor to play in a cricket match, or to shoot, or do anything, something of this kind is sure to happen. But he never neglects his patients, and every other consideration has to give way to them, though I am quite sure that there are many amongst them who never remunerate him at all for his services. Anyhow, he is deservedly popular, and his few hardly earned holidays are real holidays to him, and, I may add, to us, too, when we can get him to join us in any of our amusements.

'Well, come along,' exclaims Bob, 'we had better be making a start.' And, as we walk across the Park, we pick up a couple of rabbits, and then open out into line across the grass fields beyond. As we swing round, a covey rises in front of the Major, who is on the outer flank. 'Crack,' 'bang,' go the 'Schultz' in his right and the black cartridges in his left barrel, presently

followed by a loudly uttered *something*, as they go away unharmed by him. The Doctor, however, gets a longish shot, and drops a bird. 'Never mind, Major,' says Bob, by way of pacifying him, 'they have gone "right" for us, and you will get another shot at them before long.' As we cross the next field, a wheat stubble, another covey rises in front of the Major, who again misses with his 'right,' but drops one with his 'left;' and, as they fly somewhat across us, the Doctor gets a 'right' and 'left,' and Bob drops another. We track these into the turnips, where the others have also gone, and so we continue to work on over the stubbles, picking up a few brace, and getting the birds into the 'roots.' The sun is getting a bit hot, and we stop to rest and refresh, before we enter the turnips. We have by this time put together some five or six brace, and have got several coveys awaiting us. So far our work has been but preliminary, and now, the 'business' of the day begins.

The fields are well placed, and for the next couple of hours we have some capital sport, as we work the birds to and fro; and when we stop for luncheon, we count out some twenty-two brace. We have all been shooting well, and the Major, after his one fit of 'cussing' was over, shot up, like a man, and his rubicund visage is a pleasure to gaze upon. Bob thinks we had better work over fresh ground after luncheon, as we have done enough for to-day in the beat we have been over. For the present, we are content to rest, and satisfy the cravings of hunger, for it is nearly two o'clock, and we had arranged to have luncheon an hour ago, but we could not well leave off in the middle of the last field, which was a big one of some thirty acres of swedes, and, as it is, we have not half worked it out, and there must be some coveys in it which we have not touched as yet.

These shooting luncheons of ours are always very pleasant. Bob is a capital host, and delights in doing the thing well. No wretched little packets of stale sandwiches for him; no tepid beer, backed up with villainous, cheap, brandied sherry, calculated to upset one's shooting for the rest of the day; but just the sort of meal suitable for the occasion. 'Light,' and lots of it, and a very prince of dry champagne cups, not too potently brewed, to wash it down with, and, as the Major remarked, 'Just the very thing to drink to the health of her Majesty, and that of all the Royal family.' He and the Doctor are always very amusing on these occasions, and keep Bob and me in fits of laughter. An hour thus spent is time well spent, and it is three



'and shies his
cartridges about'

o'clock and past before we again 'shoulder arms' and make for the fresh ground. Some few coveys have been already driven into the turnips for us, we are thus saved much tramping over the stubbles, and, accordingly, are soon in the turnips again, and for the next two or three hours get a good deal of shooting, stopping only to drink some tea, which Bob thoughtfully arranged to be brought out to us, and to clear the game-sticks, which have grown somewhat heavy. The sun is getting low as we work out the last beat, and Bob suggests that, as the birds will be getting on to the stubble to feed, we should cry 'Hold,' 'Enough.' He is far too good a sportsman to hunt his birds about late in the day; and we have done so well that we cannot but agree with him, and so we count out the bag. Forty-eight brace of birds, seven hares, and six couple of rabbits, and, as Bob remarks, 'No end of birds left for us to shoot another day,' adding the hope that we will arrange to meet again at an early date, while the days are still long and the birds will lie, an invitation which hardly requires repetition to induce us to accept.

PUFFS FROM AN OLD PIPE.

By 'DOOKER.'

YES, I have been long silent; but what will you? As usual, I have been chucked aside, and preference given to some younger pipe, whilst I, an old favourite, have been lying in a corner and getting smothered in dust. Under such circumstances, and with none of my dear tobacco keeping up a delightful glow within me during the frosty weather, is it a wonder that I have been torpid? However, my master, Jim, has at last been struck with remorse, a feeling I believe human beings have occasionally, and, as he had just been talking pig for over an hour with another enthusiastic hog-hunter, who has just left, it has occurred to him to have a smoke out of his old pal. So I am happy; memories have revived within me, scenes of shikar come crowding back, and once more I am inclined to puff forth some of my reminiscences. Jim is snoring in his armchair, and has laid me down on his writing table, so, whilst he is enjoying his 'forty winks,' I will take the liberty of borrowing his pen and resume the broken thread of my memoirs.

Let me see, where did I leave off? Ah! I remember. We had had some pig-sticking, and were about to start on a hot weather trip to the jungles of Chanda in quest of tigers, bears, bison, and other *feræ naturæ*. So here goes to tell you how we succeeded. Dear me, what a fuss Jim was in to be sure. What an overhauling of camp kit; what loading of cartridges and parleying with shikaris, bullock drivers, and general worrying he went through—indeed, I take leave to think that, had it not been for my soothing influence, he would never have completed all his arrangements. You see, he and the brother officer who was to accompany him, had never been on a similar expedition, and so had to find out a good deal. At length the auspicious day arrived, and I don't think there were two more light-hearted officers in Her Majesty's Service than Jim and his friend as they cantered out of cantonments at sunrise. The tents had been sent on some twenty-five miles, and, with the aid of borrowed 'tats,' the distance was comfortably accomplished in a little over three hours.

I am not going to weary you with an account of every day, and will therefore skip the first fortnight's sport or rather want of sport, for, with the exception of some black buck, cheetah, and small game, neither Jim nor his 'pal' had any great success. But I forget—Jim got a bear, but as he sat up over a water hole at night, and didn't take me with him, I can give you no details—but he seemed very pleased with himself when he returned; why, I didn't know, for, from all I could gather, he didn't have any 'scuffle,' and a more disgusting looking object than that bear after it was skinned (this was the only glimpse I got of it) I cannot well imagine, for the body was so intensely human in appearance that I felt Jim's teeth close tight on my stem when he first saw it—and the smell—oh!

For some days after this we had nothing but disappointments. We got glowing accounts of tigers being marked down, and, when we got to the places, were told that 'So-and-So Sahib' had killed them a fortnight or three weeks before. At length Jim's patience was exhausted; he sent for the shikari and told him he had had enough of this sort of thing—at least, he tried to say so, though I doubt if his somewhat limited knowledge of the vernacular enabled him to translate into fitting language what he wanted to say, but what he could not convey by appealing to the shikari's feelings colloquially, he, at any rate, made him understand his intentions, for, picking up a stick, he

said, 'Now, *dhckho* (look) here, if in seven days we don't get a *bagh* (tiger), I'll just *bhentmaro* you (beat you with stick). Now, sir, do you *sumjha* (understand)?' Though the ultimatum was conveyed in broken Hindustani, it was understood and bore fruit, for, folding his hands in an attitude of humility, the shikari merely whispered, '*Huzoor ki klushi*' (your highness' pleasure).

Five days had passed, but no *khubbur* of tigers had arrived, till at length, on Jim's return to camp after a long fruitless tramp after sambhur, he was met by Lutchman with a self-satisfied grin that augured well. The sum and substance of his news was that a tiger had killed a man at a place eight miles distant on the Wein Gunga River, that the man's relatives had removed the body, but that, with the presence of mind for which he, Lutchman, was celebrated, he had given orders for several young buffaloes to be tied out in the neighbourhood, and he further suggested that the camp should be moved that afternoon to a village called Moranda, so that everything could be prepared for the morrow's sport, such as collecting beaters, &c. This was done, and eleven o'clock the following day saw Jim (of course I was within his lips) distributing marked gun wads to a crowd of some eighty beaters. What a motley crew they were, old wizened men who could scarcely totter along, younger men, lads, and even small boys, whilst more than one woman lifted up her voice in shrill expostulation at the mainstay of her household being impressed into the dangerous task of beating. The fact was that from having killed a man, this tiger had got to be considered a man-eater. But this was far from being the case, for, as Jim subsequently discovered, she had only acted under the mistaken impression that her victim was about to interfere with her family, and having found the man setting fire to the patch of grass where her little striped darlings were laid up, had resented the intrusion, and given the poor wretch a pat on the head which killed him. Of course, Jim knew nothing of this, and felt a conscious glow pervade him at the thought of playing the part of a hero, and ridding the district of that awful curse, a man-eating tiger. The tiger had killed a calf, and was marked down, or at least, its whereabouts were pretty apparent, by the number of vultures sitting on the trees that grew round a little branch nullah that debouched into the main river. But after all the outcome of all the arrangements—*bandobast* was the term I heard applied to them—was very tame, for, peeping

out of Jim's pocket, when he was in a tree, this is what I saw. A pretty picture for an artist, but not much in the way of shikar. A burnt up stretch of jungle, on which the sun beat down with scorching heat, bare trees, and an occasional patch of bamboos. Much 'tom-toming,' shouting of beaters, and braying of horns, besides hideous sounds made by native instruments of music (heaven save the mark), and there, slouching silently along, a tigress followed by three cubs. It was a pretty scene enough, as the sun lighted up her fulvous hide, and she and her family stopped occasionally to listen to the discordant din behind, and then moved forward. It was Jim's first chance at a tiger, and I could feel his heart thump under where I rested, as he watched the tigress coming straight for his coign of vantage. At last, when she was only some ten yards off, he raised his rifle, and, as she passed just below him, aimed where the neck joins the shoulders, and pulled. The tigress fell like a log, the spark of life cut as short as if an electric light button had been pressed. No roar; no scuffle, everything over in a second; prosaic perhaps, but true. At the report the cubs scattered right and left; one came past Jim, halted a moment, and received his quietus, whilst the other two went past Jim's friend, who killed one, and subsequently, after another beat, the other. Then, when all was over, Jim, of course, through me, made a votive offering to the goddess Nicotine, and I shall not soon forget my first sight of a dead tiger, nor the moral deductions I drew—we pipes *do* think, you know, however sceptical you may be as to the fact—as I looked on the lithe, muscular form that a short time before had been so full of life, and was now—ah! well, I wont weary you with my thoughts, nor with an account of the many subsequent and fruitless beats we had for the male tiger; but I *should* like to give you a sketch of our triumphal procession back to camp, and the scene as we entered the village, the bodies of the four tigers slung on poles in the midst of a howling, surging *magna committante caterva*. On reaching camp, Jim stowed me away in his pocket, for he unfeelingly remarked that he couldn't smoke any more, and I heard him tell his *khidmatgar* to bring him 'two gin and tonics in a jug,' and from the prolonged gurgling sounds that went on for some time, I believe he swallowed them straight off! What creatures men are, to be sure!

A week after news came of another kill, and two days were spent beating for a leary tiger, which, though frequently seen, gave:

neither Jim nor his friend a chance of a shot; then camp was moved on to a place situated on a high plateau of bamboo covered jungle. For a good mixed bag, and the opportunity of indulging in real woodcraft, this place, called Dhonee, would, I think, be hard to beat, as a brief outline of the sport enjoyed there will show. Dhonee itself consisted of only three small huts inhabited by a couple of good families, whilst all around the few scant patches of cultivation stretched miles of most lovely jungles, in which bamboos predominated. The tents had been sent on to Dhonee, and starting from their last camp, at a place called Chorlee, eight miles distant, Jim and his companion shot their way over there. They soon separated, and I suppose Jim had gone some six miles without seeing any game beyond a hind sambhur or two, when he suddenly caught sight of a large herd of cheetul or spotted deer. A successful stalk ended in his getting two remarkably fine stags—their heads look down on me at the present moment—with one bullet. A lucky shot, for the bullet, passing through the loins of the stag fired at, penetrated the heart of another standing behind him. Whilst the deer were being gralloched, and then covered up with branches to keep off the vultures, Jim 'lit up,' and I had an opportunity of noting the surrounding scenery. A more gamey spot it would be difficult to imagine, and a picture rises up before me of a glade in the forest carpeted with emerald green grass (an unusual sight in the hot weather), whilst down its centre meandered a burn, whose clear waters danced and sparkled in the sunlight. The jungle on each side of the stream was clothed with clumps of feathery bamboo, *sal palas*, bastard teak, and ebony trees, whilst the thick and luxuriant herbage on the edge of the water was trampled here and there. Such was the fleeting glimpse of what I saw, and as a sportsman's pipe, I felt certain *shikar* was in store for us. Nor was I wrong, for, after following the course of the streamlet a short distance, Jim pulled up, and, pointing to a large footprint in the moist earth, addressed an inquiry to the Gond who was acting as his guide. I heard the reply, '*Bun Blinsa*,' (bison) and then the man clutched Jim's arm and pointed to a spot some eighty yards distant. I could just catch a glimpse of some large dark body, and the next moment Jim raised his rifle and fired. There was a crash, a naughty word from Jim, and he loosed off his second barrel, whilst I could distinctly hear some big animal pounding away through the jungle, the sounds getting fainter and fainter,

and then a dead silence. Jim was soon in pursuit ; the tracks were plain enough, and a drop or two of blood showed that at least one of his bullets had sped true. A couple of hundred yards, and there lay motionless, with his head between his forelegs, a grand old bull bison ! No need to draw a picture of my master's ecstasy. You who are sportsmen will understand it, and you who are not must take it on trust ; but, speaking as a pipe, I felt my bowl glow with a pride not merely the outcome of the fragrant weed which composes my food. The bull was indeed a grand one, and his massive horns, their wide spread and broken ends betokened him a veteran *solitaire*. Being of an observant nature, I noticed that from the bull's black brown hide exuded a greasy sort of moisture which emitted a strong and disagreeable odour, judging from the way it clung even to me after Jim had touched the bull's carcase. To say my master was delighted is but to inadequately express his feelings, for he couldn't look long enough at his quarry, and twice was I filled and smoked out as he sketched the first bison that had fallen to his rifle. Ah ! those 'firsts,' what are they to all you poor human beings. Your first rabbit or partridge, or snipe, or grouse ; your first fox, your first pony—nay, even your first kiss, when the God Eros shot his shaft at you ; how you treasure them up, how sweet their remembrance is to you, and though in after years you may slay your hecatombs, ride the best of horses, and be the adored of all adorers, yet I fancy none of your later triumphs excel the *first* ! Bah ! I am only a pipe, and have no right to moralize, yet I have seen the bright and the shady sides of your natures, and fancy I am not far out in my deductions. To resume, however. After missing a grand chance at a big herd of cheetul that cantered across the glade whilst he was lost in reverie, Jim moved on campwards, adding to his bag a muntjac and a pea, a neat right and left shot made with his 12-bore shot gun, which, as being the lighter weapon, he was now carrying himself. Arrived in camp, we—excuse the personality, but I am bound in my important position to assume it—found that Jim's 'pal' had also had wonderfully good sport, for he had bagged two bison (a young bull and a cow), two cheetul, a sambur, and a four-horned antelope, and soon the surrounding trees, with the various carcasses dependent from them, assumed the character of a veritable shambles. Not that the meat was wasted, for the Gond inhabitants of Dhoney cut the meat into strips, and hung them to dry in the sun, thus laying in a supply which I

fancy must have lasted them for many months. Of further successes and disappointments, and there were many of the latter, I will not weary you ; but, altogether, the trip resulted in the following bag : four full grown tigers and three cubs, one bear, six bison, seven sambhur, seven cheetul, nine four-horned antelopes, one muntjac, one pig, four hyenas, one bastard, one solitary snipe, and about seventy head of small game. Not a bad bag altogether for two guns on their first hot weather trip.

I see Jim moving uneasily in his chair, and knowing that this is a premonitory sign of his waking up, I must conclude, for there would be 'the dickens' to pay if he knew I had been refreshing my memory by peeping into his Shikar Diary. Of its further contents, therefore, I must delay telling you till I have the opportunity of another squint at its interesting pages.

SHOOTING ON STILTS.

By WILF POCKLINGTON.

IN the early autumn of 1879 the good dame Fortune brought me an invitation from an old school friend of mine, a Frenchman, to join him in Paris, and accompany him to his home, which was situated near La Rochelle, in the west of France. The letter came most opportunely, as I was becoming weary of myself, and longing to get away for a few weeks ; the weather was simply atrocious, and almost every one was in the country shooting with their friends. I had only returned from Ireland a few months previously, and was as a stranger in the land. Had there been any vacillation in my mind as to accepting the cordial invitation, one sentence would have decided it. That was, 'Bring your gun, and, if possible, a good retriever. There are any quantity of fowl in the surrounding marshes.' That decided the matter ; I borrowed a dog, and the 8 p.m. mail from Victoria the following night had 'Nep' and I as passengers. We just had a run round Paris. There was nothing new, therefore nothing specially attractive ; so, after two nights' festivities, we mutually agreed to quit for La Rochelle, where we safely arrived in due course. I was most warmly greeted by a family that had long been familiar with me by name, and before many hours had passed I was quite at home in the quaint château, that still

bore trace of the famous siège of Monseigneur le Cardinal Richelieu.

Next morning we started early for the marshes, and commenced field operations. These marshes, or *landes* (as they are called), lie between La Rochelle and Biarritz, and are as much like an Irish bog as anything to which they can be compared.

In the Gascony marshes tracks of sound hard land run in all directions through them ; but here, directly you reached the outskirts of the marsh, it was just that and nothing else. Slimy mud, more or less soft according to the soil, produced a rank undergrowth, intersected by pools of water covered with aquatic growth, reeds, and rushes, and what in England we term 'Cat o' nine tails,' growing six or seven feet in height. We tried along the edge, but, only having ordinary laced boots coming about half-way up the calf of the leg, we simply splashed ourselves freely with mud and water, and never saw a bird. Old 'Nep' was in his element, and found any quantity ; but the reeds grew so high, we could not see them, unless they crossed one of the open spaces.

'Confound it,' said my friend ; 'I thought we should have been in better luck than this. All that remains to us is to do as the Romans do when at Rome, and as the 'landes' fowlers do when fowling in the 'landes.' Can you walk on stilts?' he queried suddenly.

'Well, it's a few years since I tried,' I answered, 'but I used to be rather a good hand in the old days. Why do you ask?'

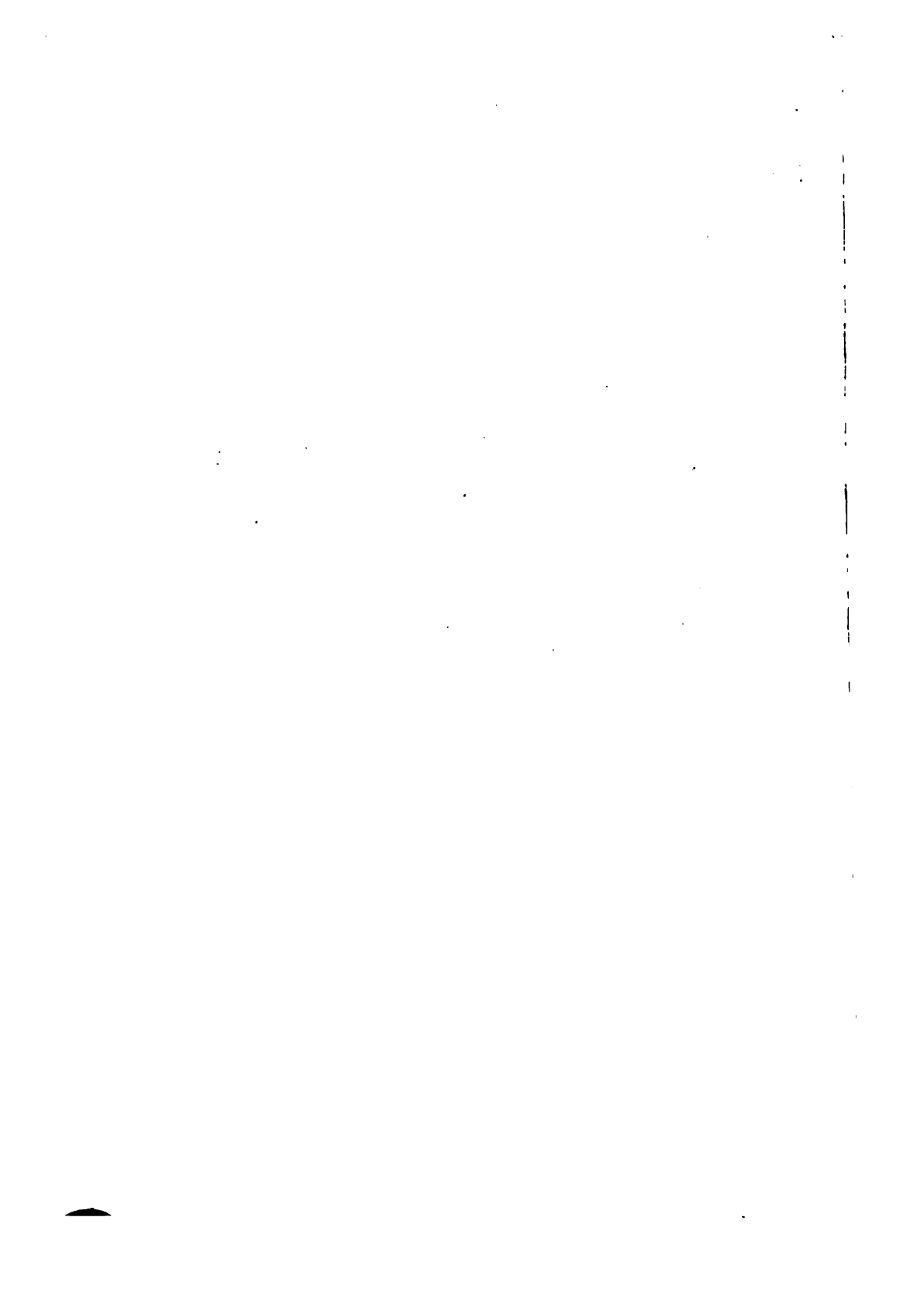
'See that man over there. That's a professional fowler. Let's go and engage him for to-morrow to find stilts, and show us the best ground.'

This fowler was the quaintest-looking figure I ever saw. Clad in the short round jacket, knee-breeches, gaiters, and cap of the province, he carried a gun in his hands, and at his back was slung a long light pole, about seven feet long, having three finger-like hooks of iron attached to the lower end ; thus equipped, he stalked along on a pair of stilts that were firmly strapped to his legs at the ankle and knee. The stilts were fully five feet high, and he towered above the reeds like Gulliver among the Lilliputians. By his side trotted a dog, the usual cur type of any French village. The bargain was soon struck, he promising to bring us some stilts that evening, so as to give us time to have a little practice. Great fun we had with them when they



Good Name

There he lay, flat on his back -



came, and we speedily had every servant of the family watching our gyrations in the courtyard. I soon became fairly at home on mine, but Alfonse was in sore trouble, and staggered from wall to wall in a somewhat erratic manner. However, an hour's fun worked wonders, and next morning we sallied forth at our fowler's call, and speedily entered the marsh.

It was with no small amount of envy on my part that I watched the easy swing of our guide, and contrasted it with our own plodding steps.

As we progressed, fowl rose almost at every step. 'Nep' had made friends with 'Sancho,' and they worked most amicably. We, standing high above the reeds, could see by their waving, where the dogs were, and, as duck, teal, and snipe rose in quick succession, we duly accounted for a fair average.

'This is fine fun, old man,' said I, 'but it cramps your feet dreadfully.'

'Then let's turn back, it's no use wearying ourselves. We are not here for a day only.'

'Right!' responded I; 'though I would fain shoot and watch that dog Sancho retrieve all day.'

He was a most wonderful animal, shaggy, bull-headed, coarse in every point, and of a dingy yellow and white colour, but with an expression of *bonhomie* in his face that made us good friends at once. That dog would flush a bird, and then stand at point. Bang! went the gun, and he would turn his head knowingly on one side and listen. If he heard the 'swish' of a body falling in the reeds, away he would go for it; but, if not, he quietly resumed his beating. 'Nep' was a good dog, but he was utterly lost here, and I do not think he retrieved two birds out of ten. As we approached the edge of the marsh, a heron went towering up behind Alfonse. 'Let me have it! Let me have it!' he cried, and bending back he raised his gun and fired. Down came the heron; but, alas for the vanity of human greatness, down also went Alfonse. He had leant too far back, and the recoil had completed the work. There he lay flat on his back, partly covered with mud, and wholly with water. Quick as thought, our guide caught him behind the neck with his hook, and pulled him to a sitting posture.

'Sit up, sir; sit up.'

'Oh, yes,' said my friend, 'sit up is easy enough, but how about get up?'

'You must cut the lashing of the stilts and wade out,' was the reply.

A rueful glance at me, and he bowed to the inevitable, and, following our pilotage, soon reached firmer soil. After that, we went nearly every day to the marsh, and had excellent sport, without further mishaps.

At times there would be half-a-dozen or more of these strange-looking fowlers in sight, and most comical they looked when viewed from a distance. I jotted them down in my note book as another *rara avis* in the world of sport, and came away after a most enjoyable time, full of regret at leaving.

We cannot tell what the future holds, but I trust it will be my good fortune to pay another visit to La Rochelle.

THE LAST OF THE POACHERS.

By 'ROCKWOOD.'



ROBERT BRACKENFORD, you have been found guilty of the exceedingly serious crime of *night-poaching*, and having been twice previously punished for *day-poaching*, I cannot sentence you to a less severe term of imprisonment with *hard labour* than eighteen months!

The prisoner, a tall, handsome fellow, with nut brown hair and hazel eyes in which seemed to lurk a half sad, half merry expression, visibly shuddered at the words *eighteen months*, and looked round the court in a dazed, dreamy way as if completely astounded. Eighteen months! That meant to one who had been a day and night rover of the fields, long summer days in a cell tearing oakum, long wintry days with the misty sunlight shining through the grating; sunny showers of April falling, yet bringing to him no fishing days by his favourite streams; Autumn winds, and yet no glad hours amongst the stubbles; moonlight nights in the season of the year, yet no romantic adventures amongst the woodlands. Eighteen months! The poor fellow looked round appealingly, but there was not one face that gave him hope. The jury were drowsily waiting for the next case. So, seemingly, was the judge. He saw the trap-door down which he must soon be led, and he saw the court-door *open*. Swiftly vaulting over the

little dock fence, two steps took him to the door, and, ere the dazed officials recovered their surprise, he dashed through it into the open and quiet street. He was bare-headed, and he was handcuffed, and so of course his appearance attracted attention, but few of the villagers dared (even if they cared) to stop the most daring poacher in the whole country side; indeed, if the truth were told, they rather sympathised with him, for he was one of the smartest athletes that the little Yorkshire town of Burnvale could boast of.

'Stop thief! Stop him!' was the loud cry, as half-a-dozen excited policemen with drawn batons charged after him, but once clear of the court, and driven to desperation by that dreaded eighteen months' sentence hanging over him, Bob Brackenford was not to be easily stopped. Six feet off, a wall separated the roadway from an unploughed cross-field which led to the river, and over this he vaulted by placing his linked hands on the top, just as easily as if engaged at exercise on the parallel bar. Behind him clambered the lazy, lubberly blue-coats, each vowing what he would do if he got hold of him, but all apparently not very able or very anxious to be the first to lay hold of him. The escaped poacher held on for a small foot-bridge which crossed the river Aird a little above the rapids, and beyond which there was a vast tract of wild wood and common land, every single acre of which he knew. The bridge then, as fox-hunters would say, was his point, but judge of his chagrin when, after skimming like a bird on the wing, a large millstream with a fence on the take-off side, he found it occupied by one of the under-keepers of the district, who had, no doubt, come a little bit off his round in order to hear what sentence he had been given. Eighteen months! A year and a half behind him, and in front the river Aird, heavily swollen with thawed snow and running at a terrible rate.

'We have got him fairly,' said the policemen, as halting in their speed, they closed up.

Little did they know their man, however. With one look behind he raised his handcuffed hands above his head, and with a daring leap plunged into the brown and icy cold torrent. For a moment all stood on the brink completely dumbfounded, but on seeing the object of their pursuit with face up stream, kicking out manfully with his feet while swimming a beautiful breast stroke or drag with the linked

hands, they at once made for the wooden bridge in order to cross to the other side. Fortunately for the daring swimmer the gamekeeper had not guessed who he was, so still remained at the little wicket gate at the entrance, trying to make out what all the commotion was about. Laying down his gun on receiving the startling intelligence, he went off ahead of the others down the riverside, but only to see Bob Brackenford fly the woodland hedge at the far side like a deer, while the water flew in spray from his clothes. After him, full cry, now went they all, but that dreaded eighteen months gave an extra turn of speed to the poor poacher, and, holding straight for the hills, he turned aside from no fence, but flew everything in his stride. A gig, fast driven by some landlord, Justice of the Peace, and containing a single policeman, headed him once, but only for a moment, as skirting a little pine 'belting' he outsighted his greyhounds, as a coursing man would say, and then by dint of doubling and twisting got rid of his pursuers. At least so he thought, but the gamekeeper had roused the neighbourhood, and the whole of the country people, up to the very Sheriff himself, were in pursuit. It wanted still, Bob knew by the position of the sun behind certain little wooded knolls, an hour to dark, yet, handcuffed as he was, it might be his last hour of liberty. Stimulated by this thought, he had just cut down a lane past a little village smithy where he was well acquainted with the toiler at the anvil, from having competed with him at athletic meetings, and between whom friendly feelings existed.

'Tree, Bob, tree in the top wood there, and I'll view you in a different direction,' was the call of the latter as he quickly divined the state of the case.

'But the handcuffs,' said the poacher, holding up his hands and revealing the manacles! 'How can I climb with these?'

With an iron clutch the son of Vulcan squeezed them rudely on to his anvil, fixed his chisel between them, and, with one powerful stroke of the hammer, they were severed. The relieved man had only time to shake his benefactor's hand, when the pursuers were heard coming down the road. Clearing the garden hedge, the poacher was soon making for the first woodland, which he reached just as he saw the blacksmith put the hounds on a false trail. Fixing on a tall Scotch pine he quickly climbed to the top, and amongst the sombre branches, watched till the darkness gathered down, the policemen, gamekeepers, and

woodmen, meanwhile scouring the country afar off. Shivering with cold in the darkness, he then made his way down again, and though snow had begun to fall, struck off across country for a place he well knew thirty miles off, knowing that if he stayed long in that neighbourhood he would soon be lodged in his old quarters. Bareheaded and with torn garments, he knew that he could not safely venture out in the daylight, nor dare he make a call at any of his old poaching haunts, which were too well known. Hungry and cold as he was, he struck into a sling trot, and ere midnight was twenty miles from where he started. His difficulty was his attire, or want of it, and he could not for the life of him see how he was to alter it. Fortunately for him a friend turned up, not in human flesh, however, but resembling a *human* being as much as possible. In crossing a field of wheat he was startled by the appearance of a man, who held out his arms in what looked like a warning attitude. He was about to turn and run off in another direction, when he noticed that the figure moved not, and quickly discovered that it was the best friend which kind fortune could have sent him, a well-rigged out scarecrow. Yes, there it was, a cross made of timber with wooden legs and attired in a pair of what had been no doubt wonderfully good woollen breeches, and a well-worn, blue, tail, 'go-to-market coat,' all being surmounted by a rain-battered tall hat. Burst at the seams, full of holes, and as wet as his own, an exchange of clothes with the scarecrow did not seem fair for the poacher, but it was his only chance, so, stripping in the blast, he quickly effected an exchange of apparel, and squeezed on the old hat, with the remark 'Good-bye, old fellow, a fair exchange is no robbery, and you won't mind the eighteen months.' He felt the pockets in the vain hope of finding a shilling, but a piece of string and some turnip seeds were all they contained. 'Farming is in a bad way,' he muttered, with a laugh, 'when they can't give a poor scarecrow a shilling to line his pocket with. However, I must not grumble, a bit of bread and a mouthful of beer, and it'll be a long time before they catch Bob Brackenford.'

CHAPTER II.

'The country paper, sir,' said the old butler, at Pollard House, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, to Squire Pollard, as he sat in his comfortable easy chair in the dining-room.

‘Ha! Burton, fetch me the paper-knife and my glasses, will you? I wish to see what’s going on. Not much I suppose, eh?’

‘Well, Hall, the keeper, has been telling Jim, the groom, that he has heard that a notorious poacher has made his escape from Burnvale Jail, and that every one was talking about it. He was saying that it was thankless work, sitting up all of a night a watchin’, let alone a catchin’ of ’em, for to let ’em go.’

‘So it is, Burton! so it is! But who is this fellow that has got away?’

‘One Brackenford—Bob Brackenford, sir. Came of a regular poaching family, Hall says.’

‘Oh! Brackenford—I know him, a smart lad, but an inveterate poacher. I know him. I’ve had him under me as a Justice of the Peace myself. Yes, and his father too. Smart men, both of them. I always liked the son though, he would have made a good gamekeeper, but, bless me, here it is:

‘DARING ESCAPE OF A POACHER.

“On Thursday evening, immediately after having sentence passed on him of eighteen months imprisonment, Robert Brackenford, familiarly known as ‘Harefoot,’ bolted from the dock, and though closely pursued, escaped after swimming the river Aird though handcuffed. He was pursued as far as Ackerton Smithy, where he was lost sight of. Next morning his clothes were found substituted for those of a scarecrow, thirty miles from the spot, so that he must somehow have got rid of the handcuffs. He is now supposed to be somewhere on the Pollard Estate, and a search will be made for him to-morrow by every available constable, woodranger, and gamekeeper in the county.”

‘Ahem,’ said the squire, ‘not one of my men shall try to catch him. I don’t like poachers, but I like pluck and fair play, and, by Heaven, this man deserves it. But what’s that, eh? Someone at the window; let me see?’

As the squire opened the window, a figure rose from under the wall, where it had been crouching, and with the remark ‘Don’t be afeared, squire, it’s only me—a poor half-starved poacher, Brackenford, Bob Brackenford, old ‘Poachin’ Bill’s son Bob.’

‘Afraid!’ said the squire, as he stood back in amazement, ‘are *you* not afraid, and all the men in the county mustering to-night to search for you?’

‘I wouldn’t be afraid of the lot of ’em, if I’d something to

eat and some dry clothes. I'd be sixty miles off in the mornin', with a fair start.'

'And why, sir, do you come to me, of all men, the most noted game preserver in the country?' said the squire sternly, who, after locking the room door, dragged the half-famished man to the fireside, closed the window, shut the shutters, and then made his new companion swallow an undiluted glass of brandy.

'Because you're a sportsman and a gentleman, sir. You're a thoroughbred sportsman, and can't help sportin'. I'm a thoroughbred poacher, as you know, and can't help it, and there—say the word, I see you knows how I escaped! Drive me back if you like, now you have me, or give me a fair chance. I'm wet, cold, and hungry.'

The squire paced the room for a few minutes in deep meditation. He recollected that years since this man's father had once saved his life, and that, too, under circumstances which he would not care to have generally known. The conflict between duty and gratitude was short, for, suddenly disappearing, he returned with a round of cold roast beef, and the remains of a pie, and ordered the poacher to fall to at once. Disappearing again, he came back with some warm underclothing, and a suit of tweed clothes, together with a pair of top boots. He then went out, and locking the door on the outside, the poor poacher heard him give orders to have the dogcart ready in fifteen minutes. Poor Brackenford quivered. Was the squire going to take him back to jail after all. That could not be the case, surely. When the latter returned, he had in his hand a heavy top-coat, a slouch hat, and a portmanteau, and had, in the meantime, donned his own overcoat.

'Have you made a good supper?' he asked of the other, who had wrapped his rags in a bundle, and now stood dressed like a gentleman.

'Yes, sir. Thank you.'

'And feel warm and comfortable.'

'Never better in my life, sir.'

'Then take your bundle and the portmanteau with you. Hide the former in the first drain-mouth you come to, and meet me—I'll be alone—a mile down the roadway in the dogcart.'

The poacher, now reassured, lost no time in doing as directed.

Half-an-hour afterwards, and just two minutes before the mail train steamed into the station, Squire Pollard drove up with

the strange gentleman, whom the stationmaster did not know, took a first-class ticket for him to Liverpool, and, after depositing a gun-case and a portmanteau inside, wished him good-bye in kindly terms, a safe voyage, and better luck and *good behaviour* in another land.


Had the said stationmaster been a little closer he might have heard the chink of passing money, and the remark 'They won't look for a poacher in a scarecrow's old clothes in a first-class carriage, so do not be afraid.'

Next day a gun was missed from the gun-room, and some clothes from the old squire's wardrobe, but he never took any notice of the information conveyed to him. More than a year afterwards he received a great number of skins, deers' heads, and other things as presents from the Far West, together with a portrait of a tall, handsome man in hunting costume, which he was never tired of looking at.

'Yes,' he soliloquised, 'he *was* low down and lowly reared, but the pluck was there, and the breeding, and, as he said, he could not help it. It was curious, too, for him to come to me, of all men, when dead beaten. Could he have ever learned anything of that unhappy past? However, I've never regretted giving him a good turn. It was certainly risky business, though, for a J. P. to give a poacher a lift out of the country and assist him to fly from justice. Police—ha! ha!—couldn't find him. Must have been drowned, or died in the woods—ha! ha!—and left his skeleton to be discovered some day—ha! ha! ha! He was no dirty game-thief, like those that go out now-a-days; he knew his business and never lifted birds out of season, or before we had a day ourselves. Yes, Bob Brackenford was the Last of the Poachers.'

A ROMANCE OF THE GUILDFORD COACH.

By THE AUTHOR OF 'RACING FOR GOLD,' &c.

 TROLLING into the smoking-room of the Hotel Victoria one evening in July, a year or two ago, I met the man I least expected to see. The story of the startling incidents in which he had recently been engaged I would not have believed if told to me by a less reliable individual than himself.

'You here, Frank!' I exclaimed, as we shook hands, 'I thought you were with your regiment in India.'

'No, I am home on leave,' he quietly replied; 'wish I had remained where I was. I have got to detest London, and you know I have no relations alive except an old maiden aunt. Why the insane longing to visit the land of my birth took hold of me I cannot imagine, unless it can be attributable to our mutual friend the evil one.'

I looked at Frank Ross in astonishment. Had he been drinking, I asked myself, but on examining him more closely he showed no signs of intoxication. A few years back he was up to all kinds of fun and mischief, now he was grave and taciturn. This manner was not natural to him—he was only thirty-five—and something of a serious nature must have happened, but I pretended not to notice the change; the reason for it, I thought, would soon come out.

'How do you like India?' I asked.

'It is a charming country,' he said, 'and I only wish the colonel had refused me permission to leave it.'

'Then you have not been enjoying yourself in town?'

'At first I did, but now it is very different.'

'Why did you not look me up? I think you might have done that.'

'I really intended to do so, and promised myself a good time with you, but fate pulled the other way.'

'When did you arrive?'

'In May.'

'In time for the Derby?'

'Oh yes, I landed a nice little stake over the winner.'

'Which you, as a matter of course, dropped at Ascot?'

'No, on the contrary, I was again lucky and have not speculated since.'

It was not then a monetary difficulty which troubled him.

'Seen this year's exhibition?'

'Yes; not up to the mark.'

'You have done all the theatres I suppose?'

'Every one of them; vamped up stuff; the same thing over and over again.'

'Is your liver out of order, old boy?' I enquired.

'The doctor says I am as sound as a roach.'

'You have not fallen in love with any of the theatrical sirens? you must admit that there is a good show.'

'I wish I had—one can see the end of an affair of that kind,' he said bitterly, 'but there was something better and more permanent in store for me.'

I could now see that there was a woman at the bottom of his moroseness, but I was not going to hurry him into an explanation. At a loss what next to say—he did not assist me a bit—I asked him if he had tried a day's outing with any of the coaches, and I saw in a moment I had touched a sore point. He jumped to his feet and swore—quite as badly as our soldiers did in Flanders—and I had some trouble to get him to resume his seat.

'Sit down, for goodness sake,' I said, 'you will attract the notice of the room.'

To believe him you would think these coaches were specially got up as traps for the unwary—a marriage agency on wheels—that everybody connected with the innocent-looking vehicles, from the proprietors downwards, were in league, and divided the spoil.

'What do you mean?' I said.

'What do I mean? you ask. Simply this: that when a pretty woman with a tarnished reputation cannot get a husband in any other way, the coaches are her forlorn hope.'

'Nonsense, I have never seen anything of the kind.'

When he had calmed down a little he referred to our school-days and the confidence we used to repose in each other.

'Yes, dear old boy,' he said, warmly, grasping my hand, 'you must pardon my stupid conduct to-night. I am not myself. You will sympathise with me when you learn that since I have been in London I have effectually blighted my prospects in life and will have to resign, and,' he added viciously, 'all through that confounded Guildford coach.'

I could not see how the Guildford coach was to ruin any one but its proprietors, and I began to think that my old school-fellow was suffering from incipient *delirium tremens* or sunstroke. He saw the look of pity on my face, and guessed its meaning.

'Nothing wrong in the upper story, Harold,' he said 'although God knows I have enough trouble to drive me mad. Would it bore you too much to listen to me for a few minutes?'

'For an hour, if you like,' I answered, 'and, I need not say, that if I can be of any assistance, I am at your service.'

'I can trust you,' he said, 'and the telling of my dreadful secret to such an old friend will ease my mind. Not that the

'wisest counsel in the world would give me any relief—the deed is done.'

He was silent for a moment or two, and then he touched the bell on the table.

'I am but a poor host to-night,' he remarked, when the waiter came, 'order what you like, and try one of my cigars. I must stick to plain soda myself; if I took to spirits in my present state of mind, I would be capable of murder.'

I was much disturbed at my friend's language, and began to think that he had really got into some desperate scrape this time; but what the Guildford coach had to do with it I could not understand. As can easily be imagined, I awaited the disclosures with the most intense curiosity. He startled me to begin with.

'Harold, you will be surprised to hear that I am married.'

'What!' I exclaimed, 'married? You are only joking.'

'Unfortunately for me it is only too true.'

'You met your wife in India?'

'No, here.'

'How long have you been acquainted with her?'

'Only since May.'

'Quick work. Well, has she not come up to your expectations?'

'In most respects she has exceeded them. She is young, wonderfully pretty, very fascinating and talented, and has a good deal of money.'

'What, then, have you got to grumble at? You ought to consider yourself a very lucky fellow.'

'So I would be, but for one thing.'

'And that is?'

'Her past career.'

'Some lying gossip, I suppose, without any foundation in fact. All pretty girls indulge in numerous flirtations, meaning no harm, before they select their future husbands. You are jealous, that is all.'

'You mistake, it is not a question of jealousy; there was a dreadful scandal connected with her name some two years ago, and, wherever it becomes known, no respectable person will associate with us. We will have to retire into the obscurity of some third-rate continental town.'

'Did you know anything of this scandal before marriage?'

'No, not a word; she was on several occasions about to tell me something of great importance, but whether, acting on the

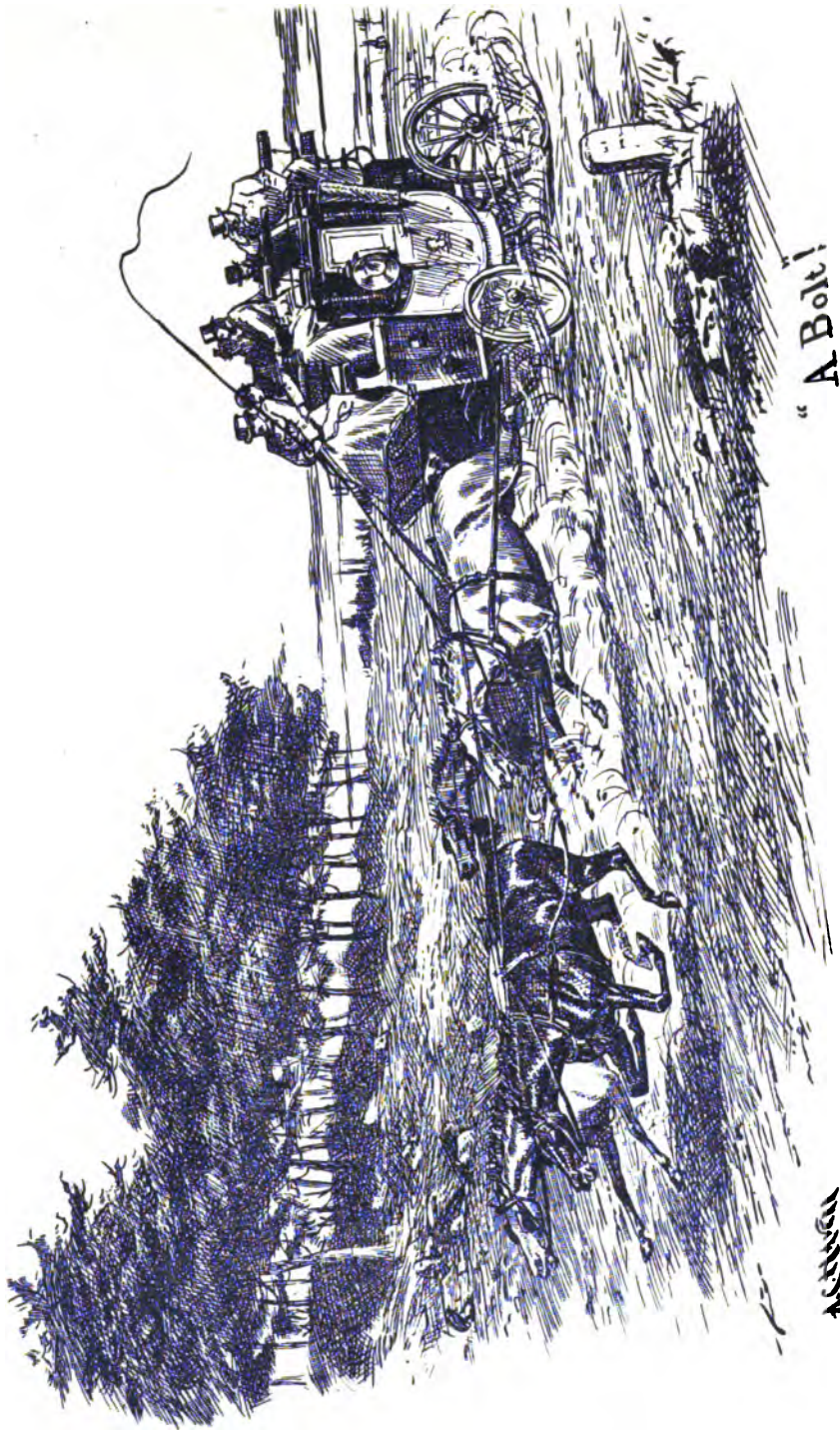
advice of her father or not, I don't know, I married her without being made acquainted with any of the hideous particulars.'

'But what has the Guildford coach got to do with your unfortunate marriage?'

'Everything, it was on the top of it, one May morning, I first met her. Even then, if it had not been for an accident, I might never have seen her again. As she was sitting next to me we exchanged a few words, but up to the 'Talbot' at Ripley our conversation had been of the most desultory and commonplace description. After leaving Ripley with our change of horses, the off leader, who was very fresh, became exceedingly restive and got his companions to follow his bad example. The driver sat as quietly on the box as if he had been sitting on a chair in a drawing-room, but I could see he was fast losing control over his team. At last the struggle ended in a 'bolt,' and an overturned coach. Most of us were pitched over a hedge into a meadow, including myself and Miss Fletcher—that was the name she went under—who was thrown quite close to me. On extricating myself I, who had not even a scratch, turned, as in duty bound, to the assistance of my fair neighbour. I found she had fainted, but a few drops of brandy soon restored her to consciousness and when she stood up she said she was dizzy from the shaking, but otherwise she felt all right. I do believe, Harold, I lost my heart to her when endeavouring to get her out of the faint. God help me! who would have thought that that beautiful innocent looking creature, lying in the semblance of death, was so vile. I cannot credit it now. There must be some awful mistake.'

'I hope so, but let me hear what followed.'

'Our coach could not continue its journey—one of the wheels was damaged—and there was nothing for it but to return to Ripley. I offered Miss Fletcher my arm, which she accepted, and we walked slowly back to the "Talbot." She chatted away gaily, as if we had not just run the risk of having our necks broken. She told me she had no mother, but that her father would have accompanied her if symptoms of his old enemy, the gout, had not set in that morning. He would not hear of her foregoing the pleasure to which she had been looking forward. He told her if she was not old enough to take care of herself she never would be—she is only twenty-three. When she asked me to send a telegraph message to her father—in case he would see the evening papers—to say there had been a slight



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accident, but that she was quite uninjured, I discovered that we were living at the same hotel—the Victoria. On the homeward journey I managed to secure a post-chaise all to ourselves, and that long *tête-a-tête* finished me. Before arriving in town I was hopelessly gone—madly in love—and the more I saw of her afterwards the more infatuated I became. It was, Harold, the one serious love affair of my life.'

'You meant to marry her if you could?'

'I had not known her three days before I came to that determination. I was introduced to her father—a nice old gentleman—who could not thank me enough for taking care of his darling Felicia. He was a great martyr to the gout, and for some weeks after the accident to the coach he had to keep his room. I ascertained from him that there had been another daughter, but that Felicia was the only child left to him now. During the old man's illness, and with his knowledge, I saw a great deal of Felicia. We went to picture galleries, concerts, and theatres, and, in short, we were constant companions. Women are quicker at these things than men, and she must have known all the time that I was deeply in love with her. Did she return my love, was a question I often asked myself? She was very silent when I was most affectionate, and on several occasions, when she guessed what was coming, she shirked my proposal.'

'Tells in her favour,' I said, 'and shows that she was not the designing woman you now want to make her.'

'Be that as it may; you cannot come to a correct conclusion till you hear the whole of the story. Towards the end of June she came to me one morning all smiles, and said her father was much better, and that if I liked I could take her out for the day. She had on her hat and was quite ready to march. That will show you the footing we were on by this time. Of course I was highly delighted, and asked her where we would go.'

"Let us make another attempt to see Guildford," she answered, "I hate being beaten, and the road will bring back pleasant recollections of our first meeting."

'Well to Guildford we went by the self-same coach which spilt us on the previous occasion. We were free from accidents this journey, so far as the coach was concerned, but in returning—when between Ripley and Esher—I sealed my doom. A sharp shower began to fall, and it was underneath our one umbrella I asked her point blank to be my wife. She was all

confusion, and would not say yes or no, but I had been balked so often, I was not going to let her escape this time. I had her at close quarters, and unless she jumped from the coach I did not see how she could avoid giving me a direct answer. At length she pronounced the fatal yes, but laid great stress on my seeing her father—who might alter my views. I laughed at this.'

'Rest assured she expected her father to tell you everything.'

'I do think so myself, and that is certainly in her favour, but the old gentleman told me nothing. When I saw him next morning he said it was a short courtship, but he did not believe in long engagements. After hearing the state of my affairs he told me to my agreeable surprise that Felicia was comparatively wealthy. I had known for some time that the old gentleman had been a most respected member of the Stock Exchange, but that frequent illness had compelled his retirement.'

'Before I left the room he took my hand and said with great feeling, "Frank, I am giving you as good a girl as ever man could wish for; treat her kindly, she is very sensitive. It is a serious drawback to a young woman when she has no mother and her father is almost an invalid, so that I am much pleased to hand over the care of her to an honourable man like yourself. I believed in you from the first, and I see now that I was not mistaken. God bless you, Frank; take care of my girl." Not a word was said about any scandal in the background.'

'There is some mistake about that scandal; the more I listen to you the more I am convinced of it.'

'I should like to think so, but the evidence is so overwhelming—there is no getting away from it.'

'When were you married?'

'A fortnight ago.'

'Is your wife in the hotel?'

'No, she is at the Grand at Brighton.'

'Does she know that you have heard anything?'

'Not yet, I told her I had important business in town, and immediately telegraphed to her father, who is in Paris. He has replied that he will be here to-night.'

'You have so far acted very wisely. Who gave you this strong evidence against your wife?'

'It was Dempster, the barrister, but he did not know he was speaking of my wife. Felicia was just going out of the drawing-room when Dempster came in; they met face to face. This was

at the Grand. He came up to me evidently much astonished, and I asked him what was the matter.'

"You saw that lady who just went out?" he said.'

"Yes," I answered, "what of her?"

"Oh! that is Mrs. — who was tried for poisoning her husband, and, although she was lucky enough to get off, we who were behind the scenes thought her guilty."

"Good God! you don't mean that!" was all I could stammer out.'

"I ought to know," he said, "I was her junior counsel. I have not only seen her, but conversed with her every day for a week. It was the *cause célèbre* of the year and brought me in a lot of practice."

'I gave him some reason, I forget now what it was, but he promised not to mention this fact to a single person in Brighton.'

'My dear friend,' I said, 'if this proves true, I won't know how to comfort you, but I am still strongly of opinion that there is some great mistake.'

An old gentleman, rather lame, was observed coming up the centre of the room to where we were sitting, and Frank exclaimed:

'Harold, we will soon know the truth, for here comes my father-in-law; don't go.'

After an absence of nearly half an hour Frank returned alone, and I could see from his face that he had heard good news.

'Shake hands, Harold,' he said, 'it is a clear case of mistaken identity. My darling is as pure as the driven snow, but,' speaking lower, 'it was Felicia's half sister—her mother's daughter by her first husband—that was tried. The young women have always been so much alike there was no separating them. The old man told me that Felicia entreated him to reveal everything before her marriage, but he failed to see what good purpose it would serve. He began to make no end of apologies, but I told him I was too happy to want them or be bothered with them. I have telegraphed to the darling that I will be at Brighton by the first train to-morrow, and that her father is coming with me. If I could get a special I would go to-night.'

'I will tell you what I will do for you, Frank, if you would like to go to-night, I will run up to the White Horse Cellars and see if I can hire the Guildford Coach.'

A BLACK FOX.

By 'CORDLEY.'

NO ; it was not in the Shires, nor yet in the Midlands. The country that Mr. Langlands hunted, with the Moorshire hounds, at his own expense, was situated in a wild, out-lying moorland part of England. One of those halcyon countries where farmers are sportsmen to the back-bone and to a man ; where foxes are wild, staunch, true, and straight-necked ; where claims for damage are unthought of, and a poultry fund is represented by a present of a pig, a dress, or, may be, a side-saddle to a farmer's wife here and there (the recipient greatly valuing the gift, on account of the compliment, for the sake of the gallant donor, and for the kindly feeling that prompted it) ; and where a Master, devoting his whole time and energies, and some 1000*l.* per annum out of his own pocket to the sacred cause of fox-hunting, was universally liked cordially supported, and gratefully esteemed.

'But this was in the days of yore ;

In the golden age of "once upon a time."

Mr. Langlands had an invaluable right-hand man ; though a horseman all over, and a master of all that pertains to the art and science of venerie, he did not adopt the modern and generally reprehensible practice of carrying the horn himself. Jack Peake, huntsman, kennel huntsman, and stud groom, was a man of a type now well-nigh extinct. He could find his fox, hunt his fox (not merely gallop him down, with a series of casts and liftings), and bring him to hand handsomely. A very hard man in the saddle was he ; always close to the pack, but never pressing them ; keeping a watchful eye on the leading hounds in order to mark the slightest sign of check or overrunning. 'Twas a revivifying tonic to see him ride across country ; whilst his blowing of a horn was alike the admiration and despair of all the Masters and huntsmen that knew him. But Jack was superstitious. A certain mythical black fox was a veritable *bête noire* to him. Waking, he ruminated upon and yarned about that creature ; sleeping, he dreamed of unkennelling, running, and killing him. But only in his dreams was that consummation, devoutly to be wished, accomplished. Like all the folk of the country-side, who, with him, religiously believed in the existence of the Black Fox, he never soberly regarded the possibility

of the slaying of the animal by mortal hand. It was rumoured and firmly believed that the Black Fox had been worried by sheep-dogs, and shot by shepherds and others of the baser sort who dared to think of firearms and foxes in conjunction, yet no sceptic averred that either dogs or guns had in any way injured or inconvenienced the famous animal. Jack himself, when warm with ale at the 'Horn and Huntsman,' in the village, had been heard to boast that he had found the sable hero, high upon Black Barrow Down, and had run him till the moon was up, when he 'sort o' vanished like; scent dyin' clear away.' But kill the Black Fox? *Non possumus!* Nobody believed it—not even old Jack himself.

The Black Fox was supposed to have his kennel high upon the tors of Black Barrow Down, where, couched on a heathery bed amidst huge boulders of rock, his daylight slumbers were soothed, his dreams rendered pleasureable by the sounds of quackings and cacklings, and sibillant hisses that ascended from farm-yards far below.

Jogging homewards one wet and chilly evening in November, after a long, dragging run with a fox that ran them out of scent, saving his brush and exasperating both the Master and huntsman to the verge of blasphemy, Mr. Langlands, riding side by side with Jack in the midst of the draggled and weary pack, had his ears filled with the endless story: the Black Fox—the Black Fox—the Black Fox. The first whipper-in paced along ahead; the second whipper-in brought up the rear; and all shogged on at that monotonous five-miles-an-hour speed ycelpt, 'hounds' pace,' and whilst the Master strove to comfort himself with a sodden cigar, our friend Jack rolled out his interminable story of how he would like to run the Black Fox some morning, on a scent that flamed breast high. What a dusting he would give him 'to be sure;' and how causes inexplicable and supernatural would inevitably supervene, to save the brush of the Black Fox. And so with this yarn in his ears, the damp and spluttering weed in his mouth, and these verses of an old hunting song upon his lips, the Master at last saw the welcome lights of the kennels gleaming at the end of a long avenue of sad beech-trees:

A fox got up one moonshiny night
And as he reared himself upright,
He prayed to the Moon to give him light,
Before he laid him down O!

Down O, down O! Before he laid him down O!

And when he got to the very next wood,
 Upon his hind legs there he stood.
 A little bit of goose would do me good,
 Before I lay me down O!
 Down O, down O! Before I lay me down O!

* * * * *

Mr. Langlands had bathed and dressed and dined alone—dined comfortably and well: having drunk, moreover, the best part of a bottle of particularly fine Burgundy. He sat stretched out before a noble fire, with a pair of wax candles at his elbow, a volume of Whyte Melville in his hand, and a choice Cabana in his mouth, and ruminated upon sport in general, fox-hunting, the king of sports, in particular, and especially upon the recent doings and fortunes of the Moorshire hounds under his Mastership. Then he fell to thinking about the parson, and not with those feelings of respect and veneration with which one ought to regard one's vicar, especially when that vicar divides with us all the influence, education, refinement, and wealth in the parish; but with wishes for his confounding, translating, or extinction. For the holy man was a secret enemy of the king of sports; inveighed privately against that noble pastime, and even had the audacity to whisper secretly to the females of his congregation—to the ewes and lambs of his flock, that it was sinful. More openly he dared not act; he feared to forbid hunting upon his glebe; to erect wire fencing thereupon, or to wage war against the foxes; for he greatly regarded public opinion. In a word, he 'feared the people.' And finally, by a natural sequence, came thoughts of good old Jack Peake, and, of course, of the Black Fox. 'Hang the Black Fox,' said the Squire to himself, as he carelessly caressed with his left hand the shapely head of an old bitch hound that sat beside him with her head upon his knee; 'twas old Melody, the chief matron of the pack; mother of Madcap, and Marmion, and Messenger, and all the flower of the kennel; shortly to be mother of a fresh litter of stout puppies, in good time to turn out keen in quest, swift in speed, stout, staunch, and death on foxes. And what with cursing the Black Fox, and praying for the parson's reformation or removal, fondling the head of Melody, and attending to his cigar (Major Whyte Melville had long ago slipped on to the floor), the Squire was pretty well occupied. He was in that delightful, languorous, pleasantly-tired condition, the combined product of dinner, wine, and warmth, after a hard

day with the hounds, in mist, and rain, and chilly air. Presently his eye wandered round the room, seeing, but scarce noting the sporting trophies which hung upon the walls and about the apartment. There were otters and badgers, stuffed and mounted; a pole-cat grinned down from the mantel-piece; great trout, lured from pellucid depths, during the brief period of annual madness of the May-fly season, glittered in cases with living colours; a well filled gun cupboard stood darkling in a corner, whilst rods, and bows, and whips (aye, even the implements requisite for the due prosecution of the rejuvenescent science of falconry), hung in a rack over the door. But that which would chiefly arrest the attention of a venatic visitor was the numerous collection of masks and brushes—the trophies of many a glorious day with the Moorshire. And it was upon these that the Master's fugitive eye dwelled, pleased. Oblivion came, and as it were, in a moment, he was out upon the heathery slopes of Black Barrow Down, facing a sweet West wind that rushed past; mounted on John Peel, the pick of his stud, with the pack ahead, racing along, heads up and sterns down, as they sweep onwards in full cry, he thinks he has never ridden so glorious a chase. How exquisite the sensations; how dwarfed the discomfort and disappointment of the preceding day! Ye Gods! how the old horse fences! Never had he felt him gallop so strong or jump so big. How the breeze whistles past as they drive along upon a burning scent; for to-day is soft and mild, utterly unlike the previous one's gelid blasts, and cold, catchy scent, which now serves breast-high! And lo! there is the Black Fox ahead! Black as a coal, save for a snow-white tag on his brush, indicating an old dog-fox. The good hounds catch a view, and have their hackles up, running for blood. The fox is wet and draggled; obviously he has shot his bolt. Coming to the rugged tors on the backbone of the ridge, coming to that sedgy wild, upon which tradition has fixed his home, he essays to take earth; but just as he reaches the rocky fastnesses, and is going to ground therein, the leading hounds run into him, and roll him over; whilst he and Jack, hastily dismounting, are just in time to save his corpse unmangled. 'Whoo-whoop!' chanted by the whipper-in, resounds along the height. 'Yoo-ie! tear him and eat him!' screams the Master, as he throws the brushless carcase to the pack.

* * * * *

He awakes from his dream, to find himself rolling upon the

floor, clutching a fox's brush in his hand, whilst the old bitch alternately worries the trophy snatched from the wall, and slobbers over his hands and face, in a mingled ecstasy of venatic enthusiasm, and servile adoration.

Here endeth.ye fyttte of ye Blacke Foxe.

A FAIR HORSEDEALER ;

OR, RIDING TO SELL.

By CINQFOIL.

NO, Mr. Warner, I am afraid he isn't quite up to my form. I want something with more style and quality about it.'

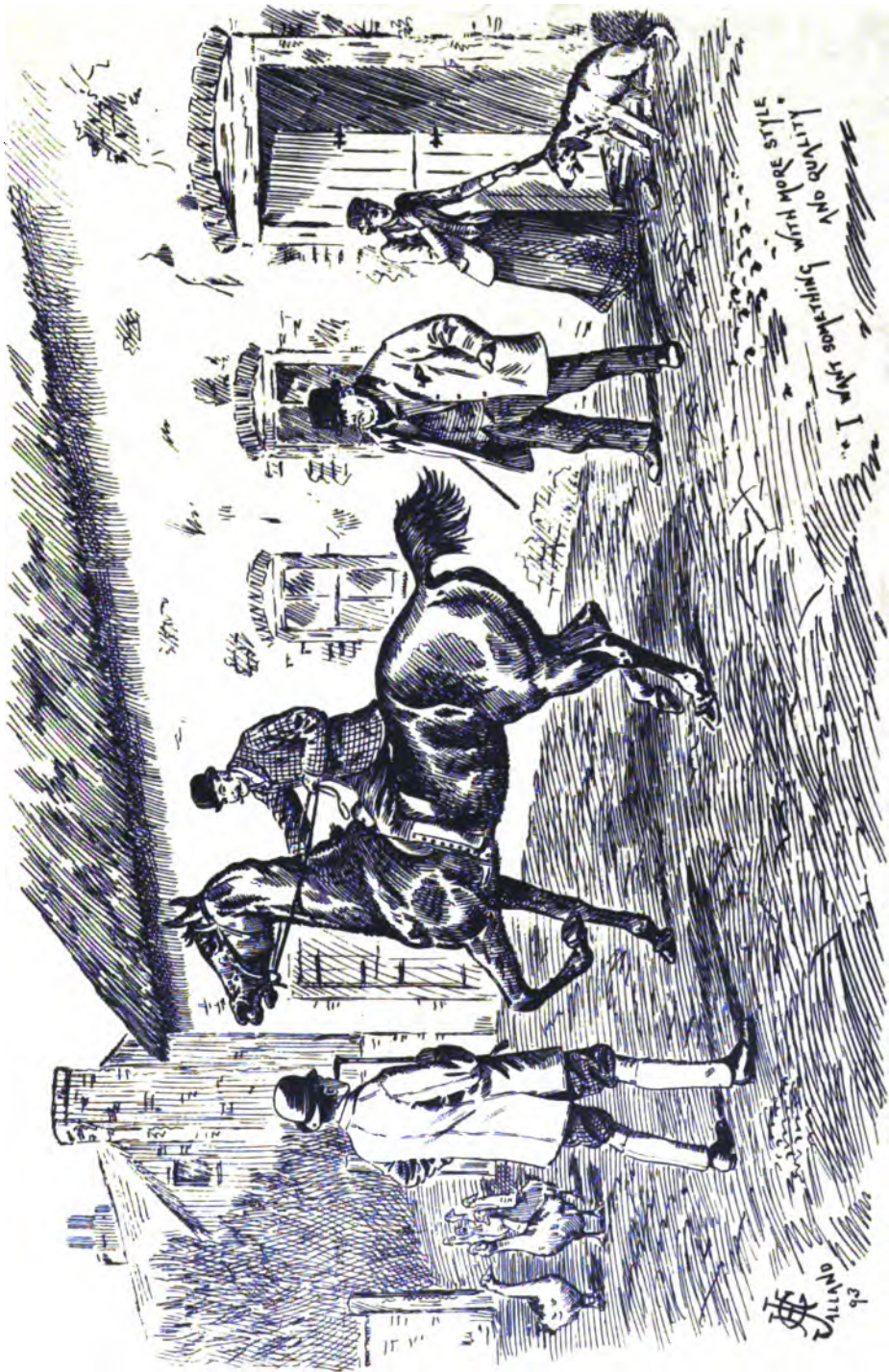
'Well, sir, of course you know best, but he's a rare good one, and dirt cheap at the money, look at his back and loins, there's power and'

'Yes, yes, I can see all that. He's a nice enough horse of his kind, but he won't do for me, not quite up to my mark, you know.'

A great strapping brown colt was fidgetting and bouncing about under the somewhat heavy hands of young Warner, a hard, bold rider, but by no means a finished horseman, and the last man in the world to 'show' a raw youngster to advantage. The group who were looking on consisted of Mr. Yellowby—Sporting Tom, as his friends on the Stock Exchange called him—and Mr. Warner, a grey bearded, hale old farmer, who was standing with his stout legs wide apart, an ash stick tucked under his right arm, while he chewed a straw in a contemplative manner with his left, as a well-known Irishman described it. At a little distance, Miss Minnie Wheeler, a niece of the worthy farmer, was watching the deal with much amusement.

Minnie Wheeler was a small, slightly built girl with bright russet hair, strongly inclining to be red, and a little round laughing face which was always overflowing with merriment. It was impossible to feel dull or sad with her bright, merry eyes upon one, while her spirits, which inclined to the boisterous, were irresistible.

Mr. Warner was evidently disappointed at not selling his colt, but as they walked back towards the farmhouse he asked



I am something
with more style
and quality

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Mr. Yellowby politely to come in and have a bit of something before his drive back.

While he was hesitating, Minnie said, 'Oh, yes! I'll run in and see about it,' and set off without a moment's delay as fast as she could go. This decided Sporting Tom, who considered himself quite as good a judge of the fair sex as of a horse, and, indeed, were the truth told, he had far more experience of the one than of the other. During the latter part of the exhibition of the powers of the brown colt he had been paying far more attention to the fair Minnie than to the ostensible object of his visit, a fact which was by no means lost on that particularly wide awake young lady.

When Mr. Warner and his guest reached the house, Miss Wheeler had got some cold meat and bread and cheese on the table, and was running about getting everything ready. She poured out Mr. Yellowby's beer for him, bringing a fine head to the rim of the silver tankard in which she handed it to him with a dainty grace, and afterwards mixed him a glass of whisky and water.

That gentleman, being in the very best of spirits, laid himself out to be agreeable, finally saying, in great good humour as he departed, 'Well, Mr. Warner, I shall not be down for a fortnight, but I will see you at the Monday meet, wherever it is, and you shall let me know if you have heard of anything likely to suit me, and then I'll come over and see it, and ask this young lady to mix me some more grog.'

Mr. Warner looked very gloomy after Sporting Tom had gone, and William was furious at what he considered the shocking manner in which Minnie had gone on, that susceptible young man being deeply in love with his giddy cousin. The latter, after waving many farewells to Sporting Tom, came back gaily into the parlour just as Mr. Warner said in a grumbling tone :

'It's all very well for he to talk like that, but I wish he'd a bought the colt, and rent day coming on too.'

'You dear old thing,' exclaimed his niece gaily. 'You don't know how to sell a horse any more than a baby, you should have left it to me.'

'I don't know what more could be done. He is perfectly sound, and Bill here rode him over all his jumps.'

'Never mind, Uncle, you leave it to your naughty little niece, and I'll sell him for you. Why you didn't go the right way

to work at all. You should have asked Mr. Yellowjock, or whatever his silly name is, in to lunch *first*, and shown him the horse *afterwards*, you dear old innocent.'

Bill Warner had left the room in high dudgeon during these remarks, to the great amusement of Minnie, who delighted in teasing him.

'Let me ride the colt a bit, Uncle, and then you can sell him as carrying a lady,' pleaded the girl, nestling up to the old man in a caressing manner as he stood with his back to the fire.

Mr. Warner was no more proof against the persuasive arts of his niece than were other people, and readily granted his permission, adding, 'I'll give you a handsome commission if you can sell him, you conceited little puss!' Minnie clapped her hands, gave the old man a kiss, and ran out of the room to get a hat. Coming out of the house in a minute or two she went in search of her cousin, who was working off his ill temper by drawing various samples of barley for his father to take to market next day.

'Can you come out with me a bit, Willie?' asked the girl, when she found him.

'H'm! dunno, not just yet, till I've done this,' was the answer, in a rather grumpy tone.

'Oh, Willie, and I want to go down to the village. I shall have to go alone.'

'Well, wait a minute, Minnie, there's a good girl, and I'll come, only I must put up these samples.'

Minnie perched herself on the edge of a corn bin, and proceeded to lecture her cousin for being angry, when she was only trying to prevent a deal going off altogether.

Willie was a good, honest fellow, and no match in a contest of words with his pretty cousin, especially in a case like the present, for he well knew that for one horse he had seen sold she had seen a hundred, as her father was a trainer at Newmarket, and Minnie was his spoiled child, and since her mother's death had managed his house and entertained the numerous guests, of all sorts and kinds, to whom a trainer's hospitality has to be extended.

When Mr. Yellowby came in she had mentally reckoned him up, and had come to the conclusion that he was by no means so clever as he thought. She had been in despair at the blundering way in which the colt had been shown off, and had determined to do her best to put matters straight.

Willie had soon finished his task, and declared himself ready to accompany his little cousin wheresoever she might lead, so she marched him off in triumph to the village post office and sent off a telegram addressed

WHEELER.

Alloway House, Newmarket.

*Send my best saddle, bridle, and hunting kit
complete at once.*

MINNIE.

She showed the telegram to her escort, who said :

‘What on earth is that for?’

‘I’m going to sell the brown colt,’ was her confident answer, ‘and to Mr. Yellowjock, too,’ she added, with a saucy laugh. ‘Now, be a good boy, Willie, and promise to help me, and I will tell you all about it. In the first place, can you clip a horse?’

‘Yes; to be sure I can.’

‘Well, then, we will do him to-morrow, and you must have him up, and we will put him to regular work. I’ll see to that part for you.’

‘Have you said anything to father?’

‘Yes; he says I may ride him.’

‘All right, what a lark it will be,’ added Willie, entering into the spirit of the thing.

‘The saddle and my things should be here by midday to-morrow, and we shall not get him trimmed by then, but don’t say a word more to Uncle about it.’

‘Quality, indeed!’ she exclaimed indignantly, after a minute or two, ‘there’s a deal more quality about Bruin than about Mr. Yellowjock, with all his money and his airs. I know the sort well, see lots of them in the course of the year, plenty of thoroughbred ones, too, for the matter of that, and I know the difference in a minute. He was afraid of the horse, Willie, that’s why he wouldn’t suit him, he bounced about a bit too much for his nerves.’

Next day Mr. Warner went off to market with his capacious pockets filled with the sample bags which his son had filled for him the day before. No sooner was his back turned than the young people began work on the colt. He was a good-natured quiet beast enough, and soon got used to the feel of the clipping machine, when he was soothed and caressed by the fair hands of the trainer’s daughter, who regaled him with lumps of sugar and bits of bread, and quite won his heart. By the time his coat was off, and his mane had been reduced, and his tail

squared, the latter operations being carried out by Minnie herself, as she would not trust them to the inexperienced hands of her cousin, the horse looked quite a different beast.

'There,' she said, exultingly, looking at the result of her work, 'isn't he a beauty. How on earth would you expect a flat like that Yellowjock to see his points when they were covered up with all that hair, and he had a mane and tail like a cart-horse.'

They soon had the saddle on him, and Willie took him out for a spin to warm him up a bit, as Minnie's things had not arrived. Away he went the moment he felt the sharp autumn air blowing on his unprotected flanks, bucking and jumping all across the field. Willie could stick on, even if his riding was wanting in other merits, and the horse soon steadied down into a swinging hand gallop. Minnie stood watching him, her hair, which had most of it come down during a struggle with Bruin, who had resented the pulling of its forelock, blowing about in the breeze, and she made a very charming picture as she leaned against the gate, and small wonder was it that after going round a time or two Willie found it necessary to stop and tell her so, an announcement she greeted with a pretty little *moue*, and a saucy toss of her head.

'My word, he *can* go,' was Minnie's comment as she watched the sweeping powerful stride of the big brown.

The colt was well-bred, with strong back and quarters, and a good shoulder, and, as Minnie saw directly, would fetch far more than the eighty guineas which Mr. Warner had asked for him when once in the hands of a sharp dealer. Bruin was warmly clothed and housed in an airy loose box, after being thoroughly cleaned by his two attendants, who retired to the house extremely pleased with their day's work.

Next morning the side saddle and habit arrived, and Minnie soon after breakfast started for a good steady bit of exercising. Master Bruin rather resented a habit at first, but soon found that those light hands were as firm as iron, and that he had no choice but to surrender at discretion. Before they had been out an hour the pair had become firm friends. Miss Wheeler knew far too much about the job she had undertaken to go bucketing the colt about, and confined her first day's work to several hours walking exercise. Next day she got her cousin to canter him in all the rugs they could find to fetch off some of the superfluous fat with which his ribs were lined. The

colt had been kept mostly on hard food, and so was not in quite so soft a state as might have been expected. In a day or two the work was increased, as there was only a very short time in which to condition him, if Minnie's scheme were to be crowned with success. His jumping education was not neglected, and now that Mr. Warner had found out what had been done, and had recovered from his first feeling of astonishment, there was no longer any reason for secrecy, and Minnie rode Bruin all about the farm, taking the various jumps as they came in her way. From her earliest childhood she had been accustomed to ride, had been well taught, and being always surrounded by good riders and good horses, had picked up a fair amount of knowledge, and under her tuition and gentle handling, Bruin's education proceeded rapidly.

After ten days' steady work she took the colt to make his first appearance with hounds, accompanied by Willie, who had agreed to say nothing to anybody as to whose the horse was, or as to his being for sale. Bruin got wildly excited at the meet, but settled down after a bit, and behaved with much discretion. Several coverts were tried blank, and so he got some hours quiet exercise in company before hounds began to run. Willie was astonished at the wonderful difference which Minnie had contrived to produce in the colt's manners and appearance, and saw that a good many people were struck with the smartness of both horse and rider. He overheard several men at the corner of a ride asking who the pretty girl on the brown was, and criticising her seat and general turn out. Willie did not like this at all, and felt very wrath as he moved on down the ride only to find his fair cousin laughing and talking in the most unconcerned way with a tall old man with a grey moustache and long aquiline nose. As he came near she beckoned to Willie, and presented him to the old man, who, she explained, was Sir Walter Hesketh, one of the patrons of her father's stable, and one of the best-known men on the turf. He was loud in praise of Bruin, who certainly looked exceedingly smart.

A few minutes after this hounds found, and in the consequent scurry down the ride the colt gave his rider all she could do to manage him, but when once outside the wood he shook his head gaily, and, cocking his ears, scoured away after the pack. Willie followed as best he could, but the pace was very fast, and though the fences were not big, they took some clearing, a good deal more, in fact, than his 'general utility gee' was equal

to. Bruin, keeping his eye on the pack, flung each obstacle behind him with hardly an effort, his rider judiciously keeping a line of her own, and forsaking all gaps and broken down places. Fifteen minutes of this work had thinned out the field to a very select few, including Sir Walter Hesketh, two of the London division, and a few others. The hounds were baying round the mouth of a drain, which should have been closed but was not, and as it was an impossible place from which to bolt a fox, a move was soon made to draw again. Minnie turned her horse's head homewards with much reluctance, but feeling that enough had been done for educational purposes.

On the Monday, when Mr. Yellowby was expected down to hunt, Minnie begged to be allowed to go alone, and at last obtained permission.

'I did tell 'un I'd come,' said the old man ; 'but there, I've got nothing for 'un, and can't hear of anything.'

'I will deliver a message for you,' said Minnie, and the old man gave in ; but she had a much harder job to settle with Willie, who wanted to have a hand in the deal, and did not half like his lively cousin having a day 'out with that Yellowby,' as he expressed it to himself. She coaxed him into a good humour, however, and promised faithfully that she would not flirt with anybody.

As Yellowby came down in the express from Euston, he travelled with several men who had been out the previous Friday, and they were soon hard at it recounting the run.

'By Jove, Tom,' said one, 'there was the very gee for you out with a girl on it, a rare bit of stuff, and could gallop like smoke.'

'That's just my luck, every one else has always got just the horse to suit me, and don't want to sell,' grumbled Sporting Tom, sucking viciously at a big cigar.

'Oh, that's always the way' said another ; 'but it was a rare good one, and a real jolly-looking little girl on it, and she could ride above a bit, too.'

'Who was she ?'

'Don't know ; saw her talking to old Hesketh, fancy she was a stranger from somewhere on his side the country, but the gee was undeniable.'

The train rattled into the station, and the sportsmen got out and jumped into Tom's dogcart, which soon rattled them up to the 'George Inn,' where they got a hasty second breakfast, and drove on to the meet, arriving just as hounds were moving off.

Minnie had started early with Bruin, who was polished up to the nines, and she formed one of the earliest arrivals. Amongst those who came up just afterwards she was surprised and rather vexed to see a little stout man with a hard, clean-shaven face, and 'horse' stamped most unmistakeably all over him, though his get up was quiet and faultless, and his horse was as good as any in the field.

"'Shiny Dick' by all that's aggravating," said Minnie to herself when she saw him, and knew him at once as one of the biggest dealers in the Midland Counties. She thought for a moment or two, and then rode up to him and shook hands.

'Why, Minnie, where have you sprung from,' was his exclamation, for he had known her from childhood.

'I'm staying with Uncle Warner, and I'm an innocent country girl, mind,' she said, shaking her finger at him, and pulling a face; 'and I never heard of Newmarket in my life.'

'Hey! why what's in the wind?'

'I'm on the deal, and want to sell this horse.'

'H'm, nice sort of horse,' replied the dealer, looking Bruin well over.

Minnie then confided the whole story to Dick Chaytor, and the old man laughed till the tears ran down his face when he heard the details of the little game.

'Well, I'll do all I can to help you, but 'taint quite fair, the old man should have offered him to me first; I always have given a fair price for what I buy. But who's the man?'

'Mr. Yellowby.'

'Yellowby! Sporting Tom! oh, that's glorious. I'm on, he's given up dealing with me and taken to buying for himself, so we'll sell him this one. I shall only know you casually as James Warner's niece. By the way, what do you want?'

'Anything over eighty.'

'Eighty be blowed! he's worth a lot more than that, or else he ain't worth forty. He's sound, I suppose?'

'Perfectly.'

'Look out, here comes the London division.'

As Mr. Yellowby and his friends jogged on down the road to join the retreating crowd, after getting out of their ulsters and aprons, and swinging themselves into their saddles, one of them said, 'By Jove, Tom, there's the girl I told you of, and on the same horse, too!'

As they congregated together at the covert side while

hounds were drawing, Mr. Yellowby rode up to reconnoitre the fair unknown, and was greatly surprised to receive a pleasant smile and a bow. He hardly recognised the farmer's niece in the well turned out young lady whom he saw before him, and the identity of Bruin with the raw troublesome colt which had been shown to him never crossed his mind.

'Uncle told me to tell you he had not seen anything likely to suit you, but he would write to you if he found anything,' Minnie said to him after a minute or two.

Sporting Tom was in his element, as he could see that his two friends were hovering about in the distance wondering how on earth Tom came to know the girl they had been talking about, and hankering after an introduction. Tom did his best to ingratiate himself with his fair friend, who seemed quite prepared to receive all his compliments, and make herself very agreeable. She flattered Tom by praising his horse, which was indeed a good one, and for which he had given a long price, and she asked with a timid little manner if she might trust to him as a pilot. He was delighted, and promised to show her the way over everything, and condescended to give her some good advice as to the best ways of taking the various local fences. As he screwed his eyeglass into his eye he looked Bruin up and down, and seeing him through the eyes of his two friends, realised what a really handsome beast he was.

While they were talking Dick Chaytor rode up and shook hands with Mr. Yellowby, just raising his hat to Minnie, and saying, 'Morning, Miss Wheeler !'

Minnie walked her horse on a few yards, and left them talking.

'So you know Miss Wheeler ?'

'Yes ; seen her a time or two at her Uncle's, he farms a bit up near here.'

'I was over there looking at a colt the other day.'

'Find anything to suit you ?'

'No ; he'd got a rough one, not bad of it's kind, but not "sorty" enough for me.'

'Ah, I daresay ! just the sort these farmers always think is a wonder.'

'Yes ; I want something more after the style of that horse Miss Wheeler's riding. Whose is it, I wonder ?'

'Don't know ; never saw it before. It looks a nicish horse. I expect it's her own ; she's got a bit of money, I believe.'

'Then probably she would not sell?'

'Very likely not.'

At that moment a hound challenged in covert, another backed the find, and the pack flew together on the line. The fox gave one turn in the thickest part of the wood, and then slipped away as hard as he could go at the bottom end, leaving most of the field at the other side. Tom was mindful of his promise to pilot Miss Wheeler, but found when he got to the corner of the field where there was a gate that a dozen horses were between them. When he had got through with a narrow shave of jamming his leg against the gate-post, the brown horse was sailing away sixty yards in front of him, while the hounds were a clear field ahead of every one. There was a rare scent, and they were driving along at a pace which allowed every one to make as much use of his horse as he or she could, without any fear of pressing on them unduly.

Minnie found Bruin very wild going across the first two fields, as he shook his head and reached and tore at his bridle in a most uncomfortable way. She did not interfere much, and let him have his first fence at his own pace, which was a turn faster than she would have ridden at it of her own free will.

Bruin settled down to his stride after a few minutes, and, as everything was plain sailing, he acquitted himself very well. Tom was driving along close behind her as hard as he could go in a vain endeavour to make up lost ground, and to assume that position which a pilot to a lady should hold when hounds are running. He did his best, and, to do him justice, was not at all a bad man to hounds, but late nights at the club and other London dissipations had had their effect on his nerve, and though exceedingly fond of a gallop, and always unreasonably jealous of anyone in front of him, he drew the line at charging his fences in the light-hearted, reckless manner, and at the pace at which Minnie was going at them. In truth, Bruin was doing so well that she was afraid to interfere with him, the consequence was that, do what he could, Tom could not diminish the gap between them, and the bright russet hair, which shone with the light on it like burnished copper, was always four or five lengths to the good.

'By Jove, isn't Tom on the ride to-day,' remarked one of his friends to the other, who replied, 'It's all the petticoat.'

A slight check enabled Tom, who was getting a bit blown himself to range up alongside the fair one. 'What a glorious

gallop, and, I say, what a splendid . . . ' but before he could finish the sentence, hounds had hit it again, and were scouring off as hard as ever down the hedgerow of a long grass field. Minnie turned to them, and was off in a moment, determined to keep her lead at all costs, and not let Tom get ahead, though she began to wish that the run might end before Bruin's want of condition should become too obvious. With her light weight he was able to distance almost all the other horses, and, as she went down the field, she heard Tom sing out something behind her. There was no one immediately before her, but the huntsman and one or two more were just on her left, and slightly ahead.

As she neared the fence she realised by the sound that most of the field had turned to a gate, and that only Tom and one or two more were coming on. She glanced at the huntsman and saw that he was gathering his horse together and preparing him for an effort. She could not tell what was on the further side of the fence, all she could see was that it was a big, upstanding, thorn fence, pleached along the top.

'Now or never,' she thought, for she hadn't a notion of shirking, 'if you clear this another fifty on to your price, old man.' She pulled Bruin together and sent him at it as hard as he could split. He was getting a bit blown, but, like so many fresh young horses their first few times out with hounds, seemed to have an inexhaustible fund of jumping power. As he rose at the fence Minnie caught the glare of a white rail and saw that there was a wide deep drainage trench on the far side guarded by a low white rail. Her heart seemed to stand still, for there was only just room to land on to the turf before reaching a drive into some private grounds, and she gasped at the thought of Bruin's knees if he came down. Rap, rap! he hit the rail hard with both hind feet, but picked himself together, and getting his shoulders out, as a well-bred one always will if let alone, just saved the fall; a moment afterwards she heard a heavy crash and a thud, and saw Tom's chestnut with his head on the ground and his bang tail uppermost, while one white stocking seemed to stick straight up into the air.

Minnie felt that her work was done, and, not wishing to distress Bruin, pulled up to see after the fate of her would-be pilot. Neither horse nor rider were hurt, though both had got the wind knocked out of them a bit. Only six horses had the fence at all, and two of those were down, while the others only escaped by a scramble.

Hounds meantime were rattling their fox, who was thoroughly beaten, up and down the long plantations in the park. The cry got momentarily louder and louder, and then the notes of the leaders changed to that yapping squeak which denotes a view, and in a moment the chorus ended in a worry as they rolled their fox over, after a rattling thirty-one minutes.

‘What a flyer that horse is, Miss Wheeler.’

‘Yes, isn’t he,’ she said, with a bright smile on her flushed face, as she tried to reduce to order some truant locks of the russet hair, and looked more bewitching than ever.

‘Now, if your uncle had only had such a horse as that to show me the other day we might have done business.’

‘Ah! but you see he’s mine,’ responded the mendacious damsel.

At this moment Dick Chaytor joined them. ‘He’s yours, is he, Miss Wheeler?’ said he, well, if you want to sell him at any time I think I could find you a purchaser, and at a nice price too, that is, of course, if he’s sound.’

‘Sound! of course he is,’ said Yellowby, feeling indignant at an offer being made so bluntly by the dealer, when he himself was cudgelling his brains to think how he should broach the subject without offending the rider.

Dick jogged on with a nod and left them. Yellowby had dismounted, and was helping himself liberally out of a large flask and a tin of sandwiches which his second horseman brought up. Minnie was dying for a drink, but knowing how a flask spoils the look of a horse’s shoulder she had left hers behind. She looked pensively between Bruin’s ears, ‘Sell you, old man,’ she said to herself, but just loud enough to reach Yellowby’s ears, ‘Sell you? well, I’m afraid that’s what it will come to, though it will be a sad day for me.’

‘Miss Wheeler! you don’t mean to say you will sell your horse,’ exclaimed Tom, eagerly.

‘I’m afraid I must,’ she said, shaking her head sorrowfully and patting Bruin’s firm, strong neck. ‘I can’t help it,’ she added.

Tom gulped down a great mouthful of whisky and water.

‘Well, Miss Wheeler, of course I shall be as sorry as you can be that such a lovely pair should be separated, but if the separation must come, why, I shall be only too delighted to buy him. Don’t let that dealer fellow have him,’ he added.

They were riding on slowly side by side, and the girl was

looking sadly down. 'I should like him to have a good home,' she said, looking up at him with a bewitching smile. 'Would you really promise me to take care of him; but I feel sure you would be good to him.'

'Indeed I would, Miss Wheeler, and if you will only name your own price I will send you a cheque whenever you feel inclined to part with him.'

'I was offered two hundred guineas, and Mr. Jones said he was worth more, and made me promise not to let any one have him under two hundred and fifty.' Mr. Jones was a fiction of her naughty brain.

Tom could hardly restrain himself from giving a prolonged whew—as he had not expected a girl to open her mouth quite so wide, but he had gone too far to retreat, and was too bewitched to try and haggle with so charming a young lady. Still, his business instincts prompted him to say something about age and soundness.

'He is five years old, and your veterinary surgeon can examine him at any time. Shall I send him over to your stable to-morrow,' was the prompt and businesslike reply. 'Be merciful to me,' she added a moment after, looking up with an almost tearful smile, which was too much for Tom's susceptibility, 'and if the sad parting is to come let it be at once. I couldn't bear to keep thinking over it; I don't want to sell him at all, and if I think over it I shall refuse, though I know he ought to go.'

'Very well,' said Tom, after a pause, thinking how he would 'set' his friends when the gallant brown should be his, 'send him over to Broadway to-morrow, and I will get Williamson to look over him, and if his report is favourable the cheque shall be sent to you at once.'

As they rode past Dick Chaytor, who was stopping to light a cigar, she called out to him, 'It's no good your coming after the horse, Mr. Chaytor; if you want him you must ask Mr. Yellowby for him.'

'Well, Mr. Yellowby, I congratulate you, but you would have been too late to-morrow. I quite meant having that horse for Lord Flinthead.'

Minnie took leave of Yellowby, and turning Bruin's head, rode him quietly homewards with all the care which a sold horse deserves. As she wended her way slowly down the road she heard a whistle behind her, and turning saw Dick



SHE HEARD A HEAVY CRASH WHEN
THE HORSE REARED UP

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Chaytor trotting after her, his merry old face wreathed in smiles.

'You bad girl! I had no idea you were such an artful little humbug,' said the old man, shaking his whip at her playfully. 'How much have you sold him for?'

'Two hundred and fifty,' she replied, demurely, and then breaking into a laugh clapped her hands with glee.

'Well, I'm blowed!' was Dick's comment. 'Commend me to a girl for a real piece of cool impudence.'

'You go away, you're a naughty, rude, bad, old man.'

'Won't Sporting Tom be mad when the tale leaks out; it's the best thing I ever heard in my life. I never knew a man so bit. Serve him right for not coming to me.'

'What luck?' asked Willie, eagerly, as she rode into the yard.

'Well, I think I've done the trick, but the vet is to see him to-morrow.' She did not tell either Mr. Warner or Willie how she had imposed on Sporting Tom, or how much she had asked for the colt.

She insisted on taking Bruin in to Broadway herself next morning, and on being allowed to do so alone, as she argued that she ought to be allowed to finish the deal she had begun. When she got there she found that Mr. Yellowby himself had come down; he was almost in a repentant frame of mind, and felt he was giving an awful lot for the horse, but Minnie was so charming and innocent, and treated the whole thing as so completely settled, that he found no chance to reopen the question of price.

The vet's report was perfectly satisfactory, and went far to reconcile Mr. Yellowby to parting with his money, so he wrote out a cheque there and then and gave it to the fair Minnie, who carefully put it away in her pocket. Mr. Yellowby wanted to have his dog-cart out to drive her home himself, but this she avoided, pleading that she was going to see an old lady in the town. So she escaped, and as soon as the coast was clear she drove home in the gig from the George Inn.

Both her uncle and Willie ran out to meet her when they saw her coming up. 'So you've sold the colt. Well, bless my life, you are a clever girl; she's a deal 'cuter than you and me, Bill,' said the old man, as he gave his niece a hearty kiss.

'The eighty pounds will come in very useful,' he added, as they sat down to their midday dinner.

'Yes, and that will be still more "useful,"' Minnie remarked, quietly, laying the cheque before her astonished uncle.

'Two hundred and fifty guineas? Impossible. Why, how the ——'

They gazed open mouthed at the cheque, hardly able to believe their eyes, and Minnie, clapping her hands with delight, said, 'You dear old thing, I told you you didn't understand the trick. Come now, sir, confess there's something in having a pretty niece, even if she does come from wicked Newmarket.' She then recounted her exploits, making the old man shake his sides with laughter.

'Well, you're the most arrant little knave and horse coper I ever met, but I'm blessed if it don't serve the beggar right, conceited ass!'

Tom was very well pleased with his new purchase, though he hardly found him as tractable as he could have wished, or as ready to jump as under the light hands of the mischievous Minnie.

Dick Chaytor met Tom's two friends at Tattersall's on the Sunday after the deal, and they soon got the whole tale out of him, and the trio stood by the fountain in the yard shaking with laughter when Tom came in.

'H'st, not a word, mind, as to how you knew.'

'All right,' they said, nodding as they went off to join their friend.

A few nights after, as Tom opened the door of the smoking-room of his club he heard shouts of laughter, and on going in was greeted with a chorus of 'Halloa! Tom. How's the brown horse? What price, Miss Wheeler?' and other scoffing remarks.

He was much too hardened to mind chaff, but had his temper sorely tried that night, when his best friend recounted the whole story for his especial benefit, while half the club were going off into bursts of the most uncontrollable laughter. However, there was nothing for it but to grin and look pleasant, and to offer to stand drinks for the crowd.

Tom's life was a burden to him for the next few days from the chaff he got, and still more from the ridicule he expected to meet next time he went out with the *Mudfordshire Hounds*, so he put his pride in his pocket and transferred his stud to another country where he hoped the tale would not have penetrated. He even now can be seen to wince when any one says to him playfully, 'Been buying any more horses lately, Tom?' He has given up all ideas of buying for himself, sticks to the dealers,

and nothing whatever would tempt him to buy a horse of a lady again.

NOTES ON NOVELTIES.



PERENNIALY attractive is the sport of Hunting, and ever susceptible of fresh treatment from a pictorial point of view. Thus the new set of four subjects treating upon this sport, from the pencil of F. Cecil Boulton, although consecutively arranged, are distinctly unconventional in their conception and composition. Plate 1 is entitled '*Bringing up a Skirter*,' and shows the Whip rating a laggard hound, who, with 'stern' between his legs, and at the same time yelping and flying from the punishing lash, 'urges on his wild career' in the endeavour to join the pack, which has but recently gone away. '*A Burning Scent*' depicts the Huntsman and some of the field who are fortunate enough to be in the foremost flight as they are sailing away right merrily after the flying pack. Plate 3 represents '*An Awkward Customer*,' which refers to the horse, who, although bestridden by a sufficiently determined-looking sportsman, evidently has made up his mind not to negotiate a fence at which his rider is cramming him for all he is worth. The spectator can determine for himself whether it is likely to be in, through, or over the fence, together or separate. '*Bellows to Mend*' is the suggestive title of Plate 4, and there is no doubt the field has evidently had almost enough of it; the leading horse is clearly going in great distress, while one has given it up entirely. Messrs. Fores, of Piccadilly, are the publishers.

The same firm has produced one of the best portraits of thoroughbreds, by A. C. Havell, in that of *Isinglass*, winner of the Two Thousand Guineas and the Derby, and who, with luck combined with good health, should wear 'the triple crown' by adding the St. Leger to his laurels. Every inch a racehorse does he appear, and a shapely and gentlemanly animal too. He is bestridden by a very fair representation of T. Loates.

The Autobiography of an Old Passport, by the Rev. Alfred Charles Smith, M.A., deals mainly with the description of places from observations made whilst driving over the roads of Western Europe before the time of railways, and will be full of interest,

with a considerable amount of freshness, to the modern traveller. Amongst the countries described are Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Holland, France, Italy, and Norway. Digby, Long, & Co. are the publishers.

Turf and Veldt, by Dalrymple J. Redgrave (A. P. Marsden, London), is the title of a collection of sporting stories decidedly above the average as regards merit. Those dealing with racing in South Africa will be found especially worthy of perusal, treated, as they are, with great originality and dramatic force.

Fielalbo is the appellation of a new composition, produced by a company of that name at Woolwich, intended to supersede pipeclay and similar preparations in cleaning the buffs and belts of military men, and the leathers, &c., of sportsmen. The great advantages claimed for it have been admitted by many, who have testified to its superiority in *cleanliness* and its importance in *economising time*, and perhaps more desirable still, that it contains nothing deleterious to leather or cloth.

From the pen of Major A. T. Fisher proceeds another welcome volume, and this is entitled *The Farrier; or No Foot no Horse*, and the subject is treated with his well-known practical ability. Besides a profound anatomical description of the horse's foot, many are the useful suggestions for properly shoeing, and many, too, are the practices which the reader is taught to avoid. The work concludes with a number of useful recipes for the cure of the various complaints incident to the legs and feet of the noble animal. Richard Bentley & Son are the publishers.

The pen of M. O. Connor Morris is ever facile and ever fresh. His last work, entitled *Manini; or, A Mingled Yarn*, is gossipy and amusing, and his sporting anecdotes and reminiscences are full of interest. Harrison & Sons are the publishers.

Much useful information is to be found in a work issued by Balliere, Tindall, & Cox, and compiled by J. Irvine Lupton, F.R.C.V.S., under the title of *Horses: Sound and Unsound*, as he deals with all the diseases to which horseflesh is subject. The chapters on the sale and warranty of horses should be read by all who have to do with buying or selling.



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FORES'S SPORTING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

THE FIRST GRAND NATIONAL.*

By FINCH MASON.

AT the commencement of the year 1839 a syndicate of sportsmen, who had lately taken over the lease of the Grand Stand and Racecourse at Aintree, where the Liverpool Races have been held from time immemorial, desirous of starting their new undertaking in a horse-pious manner—beg pardon, on referring to my dictionary I find the word is spelt *auspicious*—went forthwith into committee upon the subject, with the result that they determined to astonish the sporting world in general, and the Liverpudlians in particular, with what the linen drapers are pleased to call ‘a novelty in spring goods,’ in the shape of a steeplechase, the title and conditions of which were as follows :—

‘THE GRAND LIVERPOOL STEEPLECHASE.—A sweepstakes of 20 sovs each, 5 forfeit, with 100 added; 12st each, gentlemen riders; 4 miles across the country; the second to save his stake, and the winner to pay 10 sovs towards expenses; no rider to open a gate or ride through a gateway, or more than 100 yards along any road, footpath, or driftway.’

Steeplechasing was exceedingly popular just then, and such brilliant performers as The Nun, Pioneer, Cannon Ball, and Lottery, being amongst the fifty-five entries, the new race-caused, as was only natural, great excitement in the world of sport.

* In *Bell's Life*, a week after the Grand National of 1839, appears a paragraph to the effect that Messrs. Fores have commissioned the artist Laporte to paint a set of pictures commemorative of the event.

The first Grand National—or, to call it by its original name : The Grand Liverpool Steeplechase—was put down to be run on Tuesday, February 26th, and that unusual interest was taken in it was shown by the large number of visitors who made their way to the scene of action.

A turf writer of the period thus describes the situation :—
 ‘In the course of Sunday and Monday visitors poured in from all quarters, and a high degree of excitement was manifested. The racecourse was visited by hundreds ; the line of country inspected (for secrecy here is impossible) ; the sporting houses were crowded to excess, and one of them—the Talbot—was honoured with the presence of several *Corinthians* from Melton.’

He goes on to say : ‘On Tuesday morning the folks were astir betimes, for, in addition to the *Grand* affair, there was a second steeplechase in heats to be decided. The town, therefore, was soon in a delicious ferment ; the streets were thronged, and the customary queries “How many go?” “When do they start?” and “Which is the favourite?” assailed our ears in every direction and in every possible variety of dialect.’

Travellers talk of the *patois* of the French provinces as being unintelligible to even a Parisian, what would a Londoner make of the concentrated *patois* of Lancashire, Yorkshire, Shropshire, and Gloucestershire ?

Needless to say, the concourse of people of all sorts that put in an appearance at Aintree to witness the first Grand National was something enormous, and knowing, as we of the present day do by experience, what an Aintree crowd can be like, both in number and quality, when we read that in consequence of the refusal of the ‘powers that be’ at Liverpool to allow the services of the police to be used for the occasion, and that in consequence the keeping of the course was entrusted to a body of special constables laid on for the occasion, we can only wonder that the horses engaged in the race were able to get through the ordeal at all. As it was, one of them, Rust, ridden by Mr. W. McDonough, on jumping into the lane was hemmed in by the mob, and kept there so long as to have any chance of winning he might have had effectually knocked on the head.

In the four miles and a bit that had to be travelled there were twenty-nine jumps, all of them, with two or three exceptions, easy of accomplishment. The exceptions were these :—

Brook No. 1, now known as ‘Becher’s Brook,’ which, had it been left as nature made it, would have been simply a ditch five

or six feet in width, with a slight drop and very little water, but as improved by 'art' became a truly formidable obstacle, a strong timber fence, three feet high, having been placed about a yard from the bank in the taking off side, so that a horse to get fairly over would have to jump at least twenty-three or twenty-four feet, the difficulty being aggravated by the ground from which it was approached being ploughed land in a very heavy condition.

Brook No. 2 was what the reporter of the period termed 'a very decent jump,' made by converting a foot ditch into an eight foot brook and placing timber in front.

Brook No. 3, approached from a ploughed field, consisted of a low bank, with a deep ditch or brook, and timber three feet high (but before the race depressed) on further side, the space between brook and timber being at least nine or ten feet. This was probably the brook known as 'Valentine's.'

Then in front of the Grand Stand was erected, expressly for the occasion, but *not*, if the reporter of *Bell's Life in London* is to be believed, by particular desire, a wall 4ft. 8½in. in height.

In the second round, too, a stiff post and rail topped with gorse was put up, as the same chronicler of the period tells us with grim humour, 'to conciliate those who were "longing" for another touch at the wall.'

Of the original 55 entries, but 17 were left in, they being as follows :—

OWNER.		HORSE.		RIDDEN BY
Mr. Elmore	...	Lottery	...	Jim Mason.
Sir G. Mostyn	...	Seventy Four	...	T. Oliver.
		(by Memnon)		
Mr. Theobald	...	Paulina	...	Mr. Martin.
Mr. Stephenson	...	True Blue	...	Mr. Barker.
Mr. J. S. Oswell	...	Dictator	...	Carlin.
Captain Childe	...	Conrad	...	Captain Becher.
Mr. Robertson	...	Cramp	...	Wilmot.
Mr. H. S. Bowen	...	Rambler	...	Morgan.
Mr. Ferguson	...	Daxon	...	Owner.
"		Barkston	...	Byrne.
"		Rust	...	Mr. W. McDonough.
		(by Master Bagot)		
Captain Marshal	...	Railroad	...	Mr. Powell.
Mr. Newcombe	...	Cannon Ball	...	Owner.
Captain Lamb	...	Jack	...	Wadlow.
		(by Marmaduke)		

OWNER.		HORSE.		RIDDEN BY
Mr. Vevers	Charity	Hardy.
		(by Woodman)		
Lord McDonald	The Nun	Mr. A. McDonough.
Sir D. Baird	Pioneer	Mr. T. Walker.

The necessary preliminaries of weighing out and mounting being over, and the dense mob reduced into something like shape by the aforementioned 'specials,' Lord Sefton, who acted as starter—umpire he is termed in the report of the period—proceeded to marshal the seventeen competitors and conduct them to the starting field.

Arrived there, he gave them the usual directions to leave all the flags to the left, except an extra one placed at the upper end of the first brook for the purpose of making every horse take it, another flag being fixed at the lower end of the field. Had not this precaution been adopted it was competent for any of the riders to bear a little to the right, and by jumping an additional fence or two avoid the brook altogether. His Lordship having said his say, down went the flag and the first Grand National had commenced.

Daxon and Conrad made strong running, and charged the first brook side by side. The former smashed right through the timber, but got over all right somehow, the pace he was going at probably doing the trick. Conrad ran up against it also, but without breaking it, throwing Captain Becher right over his head into the water beyond. The veteran did not seem however to take much account of the fall, though he shook his head as much as to say that water without brandy was not very palatable to him.

It is on record that the moment he realised the situation the gallant Captain formed up to receive cavalry close under the bank, and the rest of the horses cleared him in safety. It was this adventure that gave the obstacle the sobriquet of 'Becher's Brook,' a name that has clung to it ever since.

At the next brook all got over with the exception of Barkstone.

At brook number 3 Daxon fell heavily, but got up again and went on, only to fall again the second time round at the second brook, The Nun, who jumped short, falling and rolling over him. Dictator also fell at the same place, but got up again and went at the next brook, but catching his knees with great force against the timber on the landing side he was killed on the

spot, having burst a bloodvessel. His jockey fortunately was unhurt.

Strange to say the only animal who failed to negotiate the stone wall was Charity, who, hailing from Gloucestershire, where such obstacles were as plentiful as blackberries, was hardly expected to refuse as she did. Finally Lottery, full of running, jumped the last fence in grand style, clearing thirty-three feet in so doing, and won easily by three lengths; time 14 mins. 53 secs.

Rust and The Nun were the early favourites for the race, but on the day Lottery at 5 to 1 had the call of the betting. The betting, however, is described as by no means heavy. The rule set down on the conditions of the race as to gentlemen riders appears to have been somewhat laxly observed, seeing that with one or two exceptions none of the riders could very well lay claim to the title. However, that is neither here nor there. The first Grand National seems to have been a genuine sporting affair from start to finish, and the pecuniary results must have given, we should imagine, unlimited satisfaction to the promoters, who little thought that they were giving birth to probably the most popular race of the year next to the Derby. The conditions are altered, the country is different, the pace is quickened; only the horses—at least some of them—and the riders are pretty much the same as they used to be. Some say the two latter have improved of late years; others will have it that both have deteriorated.

Lottery was a horse who would probably have held his own in any company. A marvellous jumper, he could not only stay but go fast, and if his portrait is any criterion, was well-bred enough for anything. A giant he undoubtedly was, but there have been many in the land since him, notably The Lamb, the Colonel, and last, but not least, Cloister.

Steeplechasing, there is no doubt, has had its day, a fact that we attribute not to the indifferent quality of the horses, but to the number of gate-money meetings all over the country, the smallness of the stakes, and, most of all, the lack of patrician support it gets. But in spite of all that, the Grand National crops up year after year like a bad penny, and always, from a certain romantic interest attached to it, commands a strong body of admirers from the general public, who, after all, are the real backbone of such institutions.

The following lively ditty, written by an unknown hand—at least, it may be taken for granted so, as there is no signature to

it—commemorative of Lottery's Grand National appeared the following Sunday in the columns of *Bell's Life in London*, and as it may possibly amuse the readers of *Fores' Notes & Sketches*, if only from its 'go,' we venture to give it in full :—

'THE GRAND LIVERPOOL STEEPLECHASE.'

Air—'Bow, wow, wow.'

'Ye lads who love a steeplechase, and danger freely court, sir,
Hark forward all to Liverpool to join the gallant sport, sir;
The English and the Irish nags are ready for the fray, sir,
And which may lose and which may win, 'tis very hard to say, sir.

Chorus : Bow, wow, wow, odds against the favourite,
Bow, wow, wow.

'More brilliant cattle never ran, in limb as stout as heart, sir,
In breathless expectation all, and eager for the start, sir;
The riders governing the quads with courage and with skill, sir,
Despising rasper, brook, and fence, *cold duck*, and break neck spill, sir.

Chorus : Bow, wow, wow ; neck or nothing are the words.
Bow, wow, wow.

'The sun in splendour from on high smiles sweetly on the chase, sir,
And warm excitement fills the soul and gladdens every face, sir;
The young, and old, and middle-aged in countless myriads pour, sir,
And such a concourse never met at Liverpool before, sir.

Chorus : Bow, wow, wow ; what a chance for prophecy !
Bow, wow, wow.

'That Lottery don't win the heat, the odds are 5 to 1, sir,
20 to 1 against True Blue, and 6 against the Nun, sir;
Whilst sundry sportsmen make their bets against the Irish nag, sir,
And, in the chase, swore Seventy Four will shortly strike its flag, sir.

Chorus : Bow, wow, wow ; Cannon Ball will soon *go off*,
Bow, wow, wow.

'That Railroad ought to show good speed by proud opponents drubbing,
'Gainst Daxon it is 8 to 1, and Rust will soon want scrubbing;
And Pioneer, all in the rear, from every hope must roam, sir,
And long 'twill be ere Charity will find itself at home, sir.

Chorus : Bow, wow, wow ; Cramp will soon be doubled up,
Bow, wow, wow.

'Lord Waldegrave's Mirth will soon look sad and humble the Dictator,
Fury, 'tis certain, will be spent, Revenge a harmless cratur;
Whalebone will speedily be stiff, Victory no laurels earn, sir,
And Dan O'Connell, with his tail, be very far astern, sir.

Chorus : Bow, wow, wow ; sure he didn't mane to win !
Bow, wow, wow.



Capt. Becker prepares to receive Cavalry

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'Tis nearly three, by Heaven they're off ! do mark each gallant steed, sir,
And see in what superior style brave Daxon takes the lead, sir ;
His daring rider dashing on despising pale-faced fear, sir,
Lottery, Nun, and Seventy Four close following in the rear sir.

Chorus : Bow, wow, wow ; splendid creatures every one,
Bow wow, wow.

'See Conrad, frightened by the crowd, refuses the first ditch, sir,
And Becher, over head and heels, has got a gentle pitch, sir ;
And Cannon Ball is on the turf, and there it may for ever lie,
Whilst Nun and others that I've named performed their duty cleverly.

Chorus : Bow, wow, wow ; darting forward for the goal,
Bow, wow, wow.

'Barkston is down and Daxon too, whilst leading on the fun, sir,
And in attempting to get up unkindly floored the Nun, sir,
And Charity now takes the lead a little in advance, sir,
A nag which some wiseacres sure would never have a chance, sir.

Chorus : Bow, wow, wow ; knowing ones are often wrong,
Bow, wow, wow.

'But Charity in horse and man too often is asleep, sir,
And the stone wall it does not like, it will not take the leap, sir ;
Railroad goes over like a shot, as rapid as the wind, sir.
True Blue, Lottery, Nun, and Jack all following close behind, sir.

Chorus : Bow, wow, wow ; hard to name the winner now,
Bow, wow, wow.

'See Lottery is all ahead, o'er rasper, fence, and thicket,
Now what a chance for Lottery ! Hurrah, boys, that's the ticket !
He dashes on at winning pace, all peril he defies, sir,
And 2 to 1 that Lottery is winner of the prize, sir.

Chorus : Bow, wow, wow ; some will look extremely blank,
Bow, wow, wow.

'The lightning speed of Lottery despises all control, sir,
And by two lengths or more, at length he bravely gains the goal, sir,
Long faces there are, *quantum suff*—some bursts of indignation,
And many a tempting yellow-boy changed hands on the occasion.

Chorus : Bow, wow, wow ; money makes the mare to go,
Bow, wow, wow.

'Then here's success to Lottery, the glory of his race, sir,
In sporting annals may he shine, a noble steeplechaser.
And Seventy Four, the second horse, for losing is no crime, sir,
And may he boast of better luck, and win another time, sir.

Chorus : Bow, wow, wow ; may his flag in triumph wave,
Bow, wow, wow.

'And long may sport in Liverpool, a station proud maintain, sir,
And let us drink the Steeplechase in bumpers of champagne, sir ;
And if levanters should be found, the more will be the pity, sir,
So down from *Pegasus* I drop—and here I close my ditty, sir.

Chorus : Bow, wow, wow ; mustn't ride the hack too hard,
Bow, wow wow.

FISHING IN LONG ISLAND SOUND.

By 'OLD IZAAC.'

ALL our traps were on board, the provisions hoisted in, and we were busy stowing away about half a ton of ice—a toilsome job, as our quarters were limited and our party large.

Captain Danby was getting impatient ; he wanted to take advantage of the strong ebb tide to aid us in getting out of the crooked river.

'Man the halyards, boys ! now then, hoist away !' Stout and willing hands were swaying away in true sailor style, but we made a mess of it and got things jammed. 'Easy with that peak. Now, up with the throat with a will, boys. Belay ! make fast. Now, another pull on the peak halyards and the sails will set snugly. All ready there ?'

'Aye, aye, sir.'

'Then up with the jib ; cast off. Be lively, boys. We shall have a spanking breeze. Look out, all ! Hard-a-lee. Now she catches it. Let her "went." We have a ten-knot breeze and a strong tide in our favour. We shall make a glorious run.'

Such was the parting scene as the good yacht *Nelly* cast loose from the dock in the West River, New York, bound for a cruise after the striped bass and blue fish of Long Island Water. The boat carried a pleasant party. Besides one or two old salts—to the manner of sea fishing born—and sterling good fellows, there were Williams and Morris, two noted trout and salmon anglers ; a professor of music ; a fish commissioner, noted for his genial wit and profound knowledge of mixed drinks and oysters ; and the writer, who was, besides being an ardent fisherman, there in the capacity of 'a chiel among them takin' notes.' Oh ! I must not forget to include the black cook, an original in his

way, and one who prided himself on his knowledge of the English language.

'Yes, boss, I'se eddicated, I is. I dispise a vulgar nigger. I write bootiful poulthey, too. Oh, de Lord! you ought ter hear me. I'm little, but, oh my! Yes, I write to de papers some, too, but dey don't publish um.' This was a confidential communication to the writer, and will serve to illustrate the peculiarity of our 'coloured gemman.'

We steered right for Fire Island, the wind blowing so freshly that most vessels in sight reefed down—schooners with only mainsail and jib both reefed. But the *Nelly*, carrying mainsail, jib, and topsail, stood up like a church steeple. The *Nelly* was not fast except in heavy winds, and then she was a spanker. She was none of your skimming, duck-like boats, but sat deep in the water with plenty of ballast, and was what she was intended to be—a safe boat with plenty of room below. Steering close to a small fishing smack that was sailing in our direction Captain Danby hailed her.

'Boat ahoy! Is there water enough in the West Channel to take us into Fire Island?'

'I guess so. How much do you draw?'

'About five feet.'

'Wall, guess yer can do it; the tide is nearly flood.'

'We don't know the channel.'

'Oh! well, take in yer topsail and follow us.'

Well, that fellow led us into trouble, for we got aground several times and bumped bottom at nearly every swell. No damage was done, however, except to delay us very considerably. In the bay we tried the sheep's-head fishing, but did not succeed, and so we steered across to where there was quite a fleet of boats 'churning' for blue fish. By the way, I should here explain that the process of 'churning' means casting out chopped fish, &c., as a sort of ground bait.

'Massa Izaac, what dem fellers keep up such a racket fur?' said our cook to me. 'Chop, pound! chop, chop, pound!'

'Why, Jackson, that is to call up the blue fish.'

'Well, well! I nebber see de like. I beat dem fellers all holler at dat little dam game.'

Jackson thereupon commenced a jig, cutting all sorts of antics and bringing the flat of his No. 10 shoes on the deck with a 'spank' that resounded across the bay. The fish commissioner dexterously slipped a coil of rope from behind

round the dancer's legs, and brought him down suddenly with a thud on his head on deck that bewildered the 'coloured gemman' somewhat.

'Oh, de Lawd! my hed's clean broke.'

'Next time then,' said I, 'don't dance till you are requested.'

'Here, you nigger,' roared Captain Danby at this moment, 'get a hatchet and chop up these fish into mincemeat.'

'You aint goin' ter eat dat stuff, boss, is yer?' he inquired simply.

'No, Jackson,' I replied. 'That's a chowder for yourself.'

'I nebber eat chowder, boss! Don't like um.'

We were now ready for fishing, and to Jackson's great relief the 'churn' or fish pulp was not made into chowder, but thrown overboard. We took a great number of blue fish with the ordinary hand line, and after cleaning them we sent on a small barrel to New York from Babylon (Long Island) that evening for distribution amongst our friends.

Times were not allowed to get monotonous, for that evening as we were anchored just off Fire Island we had a visit from the customs officers. They asked to see our papers. We hadn't given a moment's thought to them; I supposed that Captain Danby had them as a matter of course, but the old skipper said they were left ashore. The officers said we must send for them.

'You can telegraph to New York and have them here by post to-morrow. See that this is attended to.'

'Gentlemen,' said the courteous and urbane professor, 'won't you stay and break a bottle of wine with us? We are not smugglers, only a little fishing party.'

They thanked him but declined, and, repeating the injunction to send for those papers, departed.

Captain Danby told us it would be useless to send for them, for they had run out and he had neglected to renew them. This worried us a little, but the old captain said we should not see the revenue officers again.

'It's their duty to visit all strange craft, but they are perfectly satisfied that we are only a fishing party,' he added.

'Well, I don't know,' said Harry Williams. 'There is a piratical look about some of this party. I saw one of the officers eye the professor very keenly, and that eye said as plain as words, "So you're up to your old tricks again."'

The professor hurled a bottle at the speaker with great promptitude, but the aim was intentionally wide, and it fell

overboard harmlessly, and after a little further badinage the subject dropped.

During the following day a good part of our party, especially the younger of them, went ashore to have a 'good time' as they phrased it. We older members remained, and fished, and ate, and drank, told stories and cracked jokes, and played poker, till the bright full moon got high in the heavens, and the noises of the bay with its many boats died gradually down, warning us that the time for turning in had very nearly arrived. Suddenly we heard the sound of oars, with the full and rhythmic swing of a man of war's boat or the patrol of the coastguard.

'Sloop ahoy! Is that the *Nelly*?'

'Aye, aye. Who are you?'

'We are the officers of the revenue. I wish to see your papers. Is the captain on board? He said yesterday he would send for those papers. Did he get them?'

'The captain is not on board, gentlemen,' answered the now terrified professor. 'Whether he got the papers or not I do not know, but we are all right, gentlemen—only a fishing party. We are not smugglers.'

'That's all very well, but we don't know that. It is our business to overhaul every strange craft in these waters. You may be waiting to receive goods from a passing steamer. Your having no papers last night does not speak well for you. Now, I want to see those papers, or I must detain you and put a guard on board to prevent you leaving the bay.'

'Come on board, gentlemen,' said the now thoroughly frightened professor. 'Come on board and take something; we have some good fellows, and some capital claret we can make you acquainted with.'

'We have no time for fooling, sir,' was the strident reply. 'I want to see your papers, sir. You said they would be ready for inspection to-night. Billings, we must leave a guard here and prevent this sloop moving. The matter looks bad.'

The professor was all 'broke up' as he afterwards confessed, but recovering his powers of 'blarney' he said, with an earnestness that was quite piteous, 'Do step on board, gentlemen; we will explain matters to your entire satisfaction. You see we are a pleasure party on a fishing excursion. We are from New York, and never thought a word about the papers which our captain left behind. But come now, gentlemen, I want to see you taste our wine'—this was still the professor's sheet anchor.

'Mr. Izaak' (to me) 'please tell Washington Layfayette Jackson to put two bottles of champagne in ice. We'll prove to these officers we are no smugglers, but gentlemen anglers of high tone, if good wine and good manners with it are any criterion.'

As the officers stepped on board the professor continued, 'Gentlemen, taste our claret. The champagne will be ready in a few minutes. We are, as I tell you, a pleasure party, and have nothing to do with passing steamers or smuggling of any description. Come, gentlemen, here's to your very good healths and a pleasant business for you.'

'Yes, sir, but those papers?'

'Come into the cabin, gentlemen; the champagne awaits your inspection.'

We all followed the professor below. Here, on turning up the lamp, the light fell on the faces of the revenue officers and revealed *two of our own party!*

'What! ah! oh!' yelled the professor. 'Sold, by thunder! Why you infernal young scamps. Get out! vamose!'

A perfect scream of laughter greeted the professor, who kept the quondam officers busy dodging the empty bottles and other missiles he hurled in promiscuous wrath. However, it was eventually appeased, and the iced champagne was not *wasted* on that hilarious evening.

* * * * *

Thus our period for this ocean picnic sped along. Our sport was good, our spirits high, and nothing in the shape of bad or threatening weather disturbed the smooth path of enjoyment till it dawned on us that the day and moment for return had come. Sadly, but with decorous acceptance of the inevitable, we turned the boat's head towards the greatest polyglot city of the world, New York, and soon the staunch little craft was careening on her return voyage with a seeming spirit of gladness, like a weary horse with its head turned homeward.

'Massa Danby,' said Washington Layfayette Jackson, 'what I do widgeon all dem perwisions that's left? Dere's ham and butter and eggs, and lots o' things.'

'Just pack 'em in a big basket and take them to the orphan asylum,' returned the skipper, thinking that had quite solved the difficulty.

'Well, I tinks, Cap'n, de most deserving orphan asylum am my house, and de mos' needy orphin am dis interested coloured gemman right hyar, sar.'

'How many children have you got?'

'For de Lawd, Cap'n, jest half a dozen! and dree o' them deribe sustinents from de fount o' natur.'

'What, triplets?'

'No, sar, only twins; but de oder next older dan de twins-
nebber bin weaned, he so little.'

'Washington Layfayette Jackson, do you follow your great
namesake and always tell the truth?'

'Boss, I swear to you dat dem seven chil'en——'

'What, another increase in this short space of time?'

'Well, I'll just done explain to yer al' about thet.'

'Never mind, Jackson,' was the reply. 'Don't tell any more
lies. You can have the stuff. Growing families must be fed,
only I would advise you before establishing a coloured orphan
asylum to get it well endowed.'

'Jist so, boss; but de philanthropos nebber looks my way;
he looking out roosts for him ome chickens. Dank you, sar.'

'That'll do; go and pack up.'

And so our trip ended; but as we separated each to his
several way, I think there was not one heart that held one-
particle of bad blood towards his fellow man. The clear,
searching winds of the ocean had oxygenised and ozonised each
spirit, and, at least, that night all slept tranquilly near the ideal
of what all men should be and feel like always.

TROUNCER'S LEAP.

By BRENTINGBY.

CHAPTER I.

IT had been decided that the Waverdale hounds should
not be given up. True, they had dragged on a pre-
carious existence for many seasons past, but so had
the 'sick man;' and when a proposal was made in
the committee-room of the 'Old Red Bull' to abandon them,
Joe Singleton moved as an amendment, 'That the Waverdale
hounds be abandoned *when the Russians take Constantinople.*'
Many who were wavering in their allegiance voted for the
amendment more from the way it was worded, and from their
predilection for the mover thereof, than because they saw their

way clearly to the defraying of the expenses. Joe was a land-owner to the extent of about 700 acres, and farmed it himself ; but what with low prices, and high jinks at Singleton Grange, his purse would have made a thief quote Shakespeare unwittingly had it not been for the hunt.

We all know that hunting can be made to pay by an odd man here and there ; and readers of the *Notes* who are familiar with the 'shires' will readily call to mind a namesake of my hero's who has carried the system into practice for many years.

It was wonderful what 'things' Joe negotiated on the most veritable screws ; and if a dealer wanted a mount for a lady, he would clap a rug on to represent the skirt of a habit and fly the fences in a style that settled the doubts of the most sceptical customer that ever chewed a straw.

Such being the case, of course it didn't suit his book to have the hounds dropped ; and so he carried his point with the meeting in the above-mentioned dashing style, clearing the obstacle as he did the bullfinches.

One of the minority, who was sufficiently intimate with him to take liberties, moved that Singleton should be elected M. F. H., as it would come cheaper, Joe having such internal resources in the shape of screws ready for the pot, which would save a lot in the feeding of the pack.

"Old Trouncer," for instance,' says he, 'would last them a week if you don't put too many plums in their porridge.'

'What about "Blaseaway ?"' retaliated Joe, addressing the chaffer, Harry Barke.

'Can't you see how the hounds' mouths water every time you turn up on him ? I positively feel sorry for the poor beggars. Depend upon it, they'll take the law into their own mouths if you keep them out of their rights much longer.'

'First blood for Joe !' 'Regular knockdown !' 'Hullo, Barke !' accompanied with peals of laughter, resounded on all sides at this neat counter.

'I'll match my horse against yours for a "point to point," and let you choose the course, anyhow,' replies Barke ; 'and I'll back old Blaseaway for a cool thou. for a start, and more if anybody's green enough to put his pieces on that old roarer of yours.'

'Done !' cries Joe. "'Point to point," mind, and no flags from Toppleton Windmill to Waverdale Toll-bar ; toss up for berths.'

'Done!' says the other; and so the match was made.

This course had been the scene of many a steeple-chase, time out of mind, and I had better describe it here. On starting from the windmill, the ground first fell, then rose, and again fell to the navigable River Waver; but as that wide stream had never been negotiated successfully, it was necessary to swerve to the right for Topleton Bridge, or to the left for Waverdale Bridge; and it was an understood thing that both should not take the same bridge, hence the toss up for berths, Topleton side being considered rather the lighter 'going' of the two. In a straight line between start and finish was Ward's Lock, and tradition asserted that some wonderful rider, on a still more wonderful mare, had jumped this lock for a wager; but, then, everybody said 'tradition' was a—well! what it is generally reported to be, and made disrespectful allusions to 'Byard's Leap' in the Belvoir country; at any rate, no one had ever tried to emulate the feat, so the riders really went round a diamond-shaped patch of country, one covering the left sides of the diamond, the other the right. Thursday, November 10th, being a wide meet in the neighbouring Blunderstone country, was pitched upon for the fixture, as Joe wanted a likely purchaser who followed those hounds to see the finish.

CHAPTER II.

SOME time previous to the events above narrated a notable capture was effected by the Singleton keepers, which will be found eventually to have a bearing on Trouncer's leap.

The bargees of the Waver in general, and one, Dick Bolands, in particular, were fond of halting near such places as the Grange to admire the scenery by the aid of long, single-barrelled guns, or with a lurcher or two that wanted a run after their confinement on board, where they were kept to guard the edible portion of the cargo from 'rats and mice and such small deer.'

Dick had been uniformly successful in eluding the game-keepers, till one day he was hailed by a woman with the inquiry whether he would give her and a heavy box she had 'a cast' to Moretown, the terminus of the canal.

'If you're not in a hurry, I don't mind,' replies Dick; and so the passenger and her box, which Dick remarked was a 'rum 'un,' came on board.

When they reached the preserves 'Capting' Bollands frequently left the barge in charge of his wife and his boy to survey the surrounding country from various points of vantage by the aid of a large telescope, and having at last settled on his field of operations, released a brace of lurchers and proceeded to some meadows on a south slope, hidden from the keeper's lodge by a belt of trees. Here he soon secured a leash of hares, with which he then prepared to retrace his steps to the barge. What was his astonishment when he found himself confronted by his quondam passenger divested of female habiliments, and dressed in his proper character of watcher! Dick was fairly 'bagged,' and there was nothing for it but to accompany the new watcher before Joe at the Grange.

Singleton was not the man to be hard on any one to the extent of making him lose his berth, and Dick was let off on condition of surrendering the dogs and giving a promise to sin no more; and as he had a good 'blow out,' plenty to 'wash it down,' and a guinea to solace him for his loss in the matter of the 'dawgs,' he swore to himself that he would sooner do 't' squire a good turn any time than meddle with any of his 'things' again.

A few days after the 'point to point' had been agreed upon Joe Singleton made it his business to look this ex-poacher up, and the two had a somewhat lengthy parley in the 'Waverdale Arms' at Moretown one morning, from which conference Dick emerged with his whole body convulsed with suppressed laughter, and saying as a parting remark, 'But, my eye, wot a game, Sir!'

CHAPTER III.

IN the interval between the making and the 'bringing off' of the match, there was, of course, a good deal of speculation as to the result. Joe was undoubtedly the better horseman, but Barke had so much the best of it in the mount, that the odds were all through on Blazeaway; and as both men knew the country 'like a book,' it seemed little short of madness on Joe's part to have entered into such an engagement. On the other hand, a few of the knowing ones either refrained from touching the thing, or put a little on Trouncer, feeling confident that there was a screw loose somewhere, 'For,' said they, 'Joe Singleton knows his way about, and nobody can hear of his hedging.'

The eventful day arrived equally to those who would wait

and to those who wouldn't, and there was a goodly muster at Waverdale Bar, which was the only spot from which you could see anything of the running, and even there you could only see them come in the last three-quarters of a mile, in consequence of the undulating nature of the country between that point and the river. Some half-dozen, however, elected to go with the starter to the Windmill. The entire distance as ridden, over either bridge, was about six miles ; and about a quarter to eleven the buzz of voices making their books sank to a dropping fire of offers and acceptances as the crowd eagerly scanned the ridge at the likely points to see which hove in sight first.

Meanwhile, at the Windmill how were things going? Everybody turned up pretty punctually, and a little quiet chaff was indulged in during the preliminaries, Harry Barke suggesting that as Joe seemed so very anxious about the hounds they should add another clause to the agreement, '*That the loser should boil his horse!*'

This, however, Joe wouldn't agree to, so it passed off with the rest of the chaff, and the coin was spun for choice of berth. Barke won and took the Topleton Bridge, so there was nothing more to be done but start them. This was an easy matter with only two, and those veterans. A good start it was, and the champions went flashing down the slope followed by the others in two little bands. Those who followed our hero thought he was taking a queer line ; but before they had reached Waverdale Bridge they had lost him altogether !

'He's not gone in for swimming Trouncer over the river, surely,' says Tom Chester, the starter.

'That's about his mark, Tom, I expect,' replies Will Grant, the whip. 'And if he has, he'll stick in the mud as sure as a gun !'

The excitement at the Waverdale Bar revived with a vengeance when Joe's bay put in first appearance over the ridge. What had been looked on as a one-sided race by the majority seemed to have two sides to it, and frantic efforts were made to snatch a trifle out of the fire by those who had given the long odds. As Barke turned up a few seconds later, and seemed to be going no end better, something was effected in this direction, but not much, for all but the sold ones were too much interested in the finish to pay much attention to their offers.

Trouncer now began to roll alarmingly, and Joe had all his work cut out to hold him together, but they had less ground to

cover; while Barke, strive as he would on Blazeaway, who seemed to have plenty to spare, couldn't get into the last field before our hero passed the post amid the cheers of those spectators who had not dropped their coin on the occasion.

Everybody thought that Barke and Blazeaway must have 'come a cropper,' and lost ground that way; but when Harry assured them all had gone well, and when it was reported that the start had been punctual, and, consequently, the time above the average over the 'Diamond Course,' old Trouncer rose in public estimation a hundred per cent; and the man from the Blunderstone country was examining him critically when the starter, Tom Chester, rode up, and looking at Joe fixedly for a moment, exclaimed,—

'Dash my wig! dry as a bone! However did you get over the river, Mr. Singleton?'

'That's my secret, Tom.'

'Well, you didn't go over Waverdale Bridge, did you, Sir?'

'No.'

'Hanged if he hasn't sent Trouncer over the lock,' cries Tom, turning round to the spectators; 'I'd never have believed it was in the old boy.'

The news spread like wildfire; here was the question settled in the most satisfactory manner. The slur cast on 'tradition' was removed; and one fat old farmer sagely observed that he'd always said there was no telling what a Waverdale horse could do till he was put to it, an observation which might be applied to some other horses with equal propriety.

Joe had secretly intended three weeks ago to accept 50*l.* for Trouncer if he couldn't get more; *now*, when asked to put a figure on him, he said, 'Well, I don't know that I care to part with him after this; at any rate, it will take a fancy price to tempt me.'

'He's a good 'un,' said the Blunderstone farmer, 'and so he's proved himself, Sir; but he's very old for you, and you may as well part with him a month sooner as a month later. I know you won't keep him.'

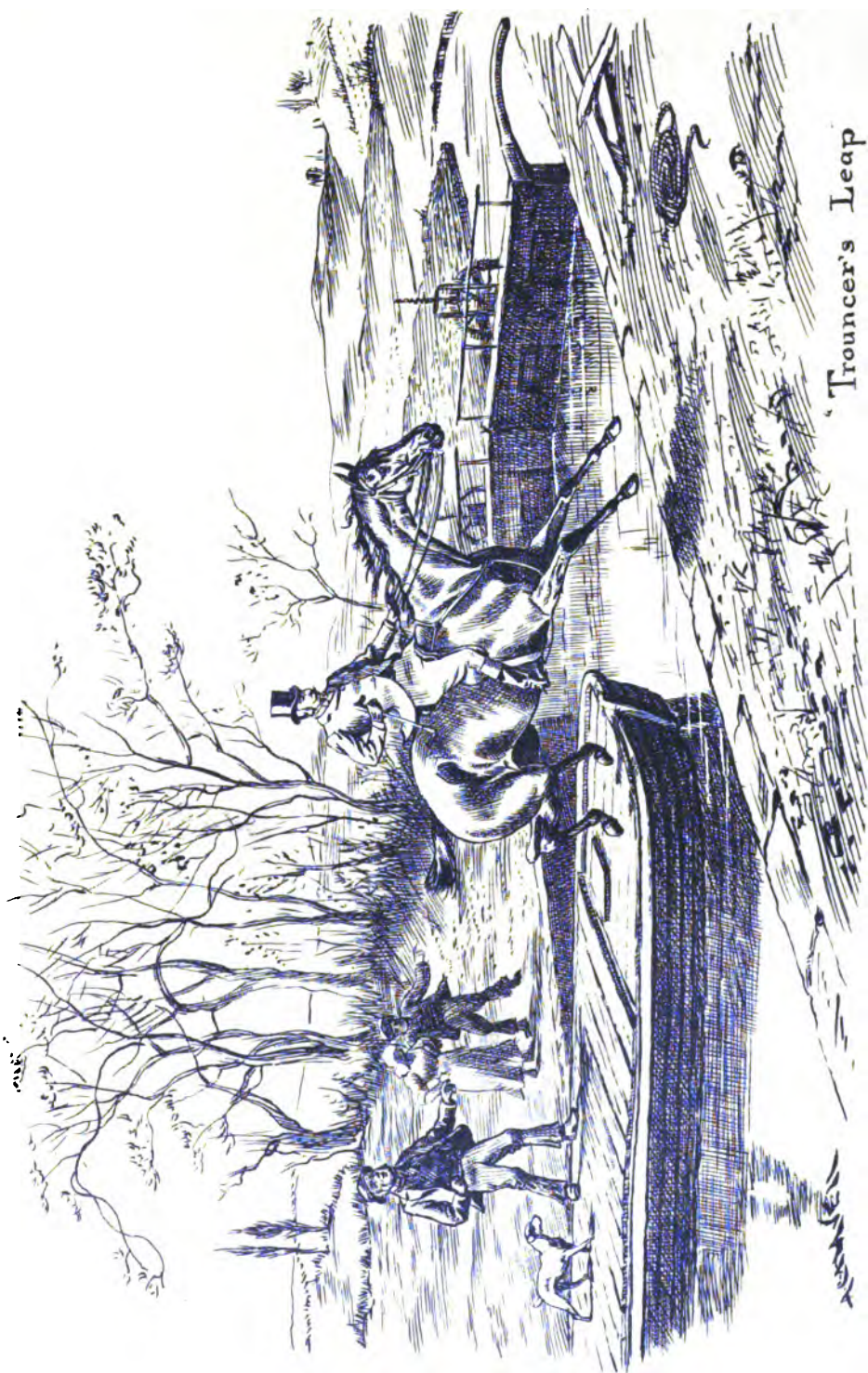
'If I do try to bargain I shall open my mouth rather wide, I assure you.'

'Well, will a century satisfy you, Sir?'

'No.'

'One, two, five?'

'No. To cut it short, I'll take a century and a half.'



'Trouncer's Leap

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ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

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At this figure the horse changed hands ; but when his new master tried to show off his water-jumping qualities to a customer, he seemed to have expended a considerable portion of them in that wonderful performance, 'Trouncer's Leap.'

When he complained to Joe on the subject, the latter reminded him that he had never represented the horse as good at water.

'But a horse that can jump Ward's Lock ought to clear our brook easy enough, Sir.'

'I quite agree with that ; but I never told you Trouncer *had* jumped Ward's Lock.'

'What! Why it's all over the country side, and they're talking of putting up a stone so as to leave no doubt on the point for the future.'

'*Tom Chester* said the horse had cleared the lock, and I didn't like to contradict him ; but my opinion (and I was likely to know) is this, Neither Trouncer nor his master were quite flats enough to attempt such a thing.'

'Well, I won't deny but I've had you once or twice, Mr. Singleton, so it's all fair ; but this is an uncommon deep game.'

'There is nothing in it, I assure you, when you know.'

'Nothing in it? I beg pardon, Sir ; but here is a horse get's over the Waver somehow, and then a week afterwards he's so aged he can't jump Blunderstone Brook.'

'Perhaps where you put him at your brook you didn't take the precaution to have a barge for him to gallop over?'

'Barge! No.'

'Well, *I did*. They began to run down my stable in general and Trouncer in particular, so I gave Dick Bollands a fiver to keep his barge in the lock, and the deck covering was as good as any bridge, and *that's* how Trouncer and I got across. I saved about three-quarters of a mile, and I needed it all badly enough, as you saw yourself.'

The subscription for the stone was, of course, abandoned, but the story lives on the country side, and many a good laugh is still enjoyed at the remembrance of Trouncer's leap.

HOW THE CHAMPION WAS BEATEN.

By 'ROCKWOOD.'

A GENERAL laugh rang out when Jenkins, in the smoking-room of the old Red Lion Hotel at Powbank, said, 'And yet I once beat him hollow without a stroke.'

'Beat who?' came the query from the serious man of the company (every company has its serious man).

'Beat Johnstone,' was the cool reply of Jenkins. Little Jenkins, as he was termed by some, a perky little bagman who, with all the confidence which is gathered on the road, was not very easily outdone.

Now, for Jenkins to beat Johnstone, who was not only champion of the club but champion for the year, was too much for the most of them to believe, fairly good player as undoubtedly Jenkins at times was. It was not to be wondered at, therefore, that he should have to answer such questions as, 'Was Johnstone's right arm in a sling?' 'Had he a napkin round his eyes?' Jenkins answered not the queries, but sat and smoked silently. Fortunately for him, ere the laughter had quite subsided Old Wattie, the green keeper, a privileged individual, came in, and was told the astounding bit of news.

'Gentlemen,' said he, rising in his favourite speech-making style (he was very fond of getting upon his legs at meetings and giving what he chose to call 'a few words of common sense on the subject under notice'). 'I am glad to be able to testify as to the truth of what Mr. Jenkins has said. I followed the round and saw Mr. Johnstone beaten myself.'

The conversation now took another turn. 'Come now, Wattie,' said the president of the club, 'if you are not up to one of your usual practical jokes, tell us how Jenkins beat Johnstone. I, for one, am glad to hear about it, but I assure you that though the champion never fails to tell me of his matches, I have never heard of this one till five minutes ago. Jenkins has been away on a long journey I know, and never has had an opportunity.'

'If Mr. Jenkins does not care to tell it himself I'll be very glad to oblige ye, gentlemen.'

'Go on, Watty,' said the little man, with a wave of his pipe.

This command was repeated from every part of the room; pipe were filled and glasses replenished. 'Ay! ay! Wattie,' came the call from every corner. 'Go on, Wattie; give us it in the vernacular.'

'Gentlemen,' said Wattie, getting a light from the gas, 'I'm not accomplished eneuch to give it in the vernacular, as Professor Smith says, but I'll do ma verra best to give it to ye in ma ain mither tongue.'

* * * * *

'Ye see, gentlemen, it was this way: Mr. Jenkins, he comes down to the club-hoose one afternoon after a hard frost, and he wants for a round o' the links wi' me. Weel, as luck happened, he was na five minutes in the hoose, and I had knocked some auld balls o' the minister's into shape—guid auld balls that had been hard thrashed ower the course for twa year and mair, and deserved a rest in the melting-pot, but things at the manse are jist like the sermons, verra thin, and no easy gettin' the haud of—when Mister Johnstone appears outside. "Noo, there ye are," I says, "Mister Jenkins, that's the verra man. Offer to play him even, if he'll alloo me to carry for ye and gie ye ma advice." "Play him without even a stroke? Am I mad, Wattie?" he says; "No! no!" "You mind me," I says, "if ever ye have a chance o' takin' him down, it's the day." Just then, in walks the Champion as big as ye like, stoopin' at the door no to spoil his hat, for he stands six feet fower in his stockings. "Gude morning, Mr. Johnstone," says I, "here's Mr. Jenkins would like to play ye for a gallon o' whiskey and a set o' new clubs, and without a shade o' odds, if ye'll let me act as his caddie. He's been improving in his driving and his puttin', tae, and if he only had a little mair judgment and knew the ways o' the green, I think he'll be hard to beat." "I suppose you mean I'm to play you both, ball against ball?" says Johnstone. "No! Mr. Jenkins will play his ain ball against your ain ball. I'll simply carry for him and instruct him." "Well, I can see no objections to that, and as Mr. Jenkins has plenty of whiskey at his disposal, and I am in need of a new set of clubs, I do not think I can do better than take you on." I takes off my apron and puts on my jacket and cap, and was ready in little less than half a minute. We teed the balls on a nice fresh bit o' loose sand, which had na felt the face o' a club for sax weeks or more, for the lang frost had kept golfers in, and curling had made them quite content as ye ken. Mister Jenkins swipes off as I advised

him, a bit to the right o' the usual line, but Mister Johnstone, he made for the usual course to clear the Washerwife's whins. He tapped his ball and ran fair into them, consoling himself with the wee bit remark I overheard him mak' to himsel'. "If I've got amongst whins, ye're fast in the sand anyway.' I chuckled fine to mysel', for I kenned better that day. It was jist as I thocht. Mister Johnstone plays "three more," and then we gets up and finds that Mr. Jenkins' ball had landed in the sandy hollow right enough, but the sandy hollow being covered with a good coat of ice, for there had been, as ye will recollect, a lang spell o' rainy weather afore the frost set in, the ball had skated right across over the still pretty hard face and landed nice and clean out on the green. Mr. Johnstone looked a wee bit puzzled, I can tell ye, as Mr. Jenkins, wi' a nice easy cleek shot off the wrist, laid the ball within twa yards of the hole. Mr. Johnstone played weel, but was short, and lifted his ball wi' a huff when he saw he was fairly out of it. Mister Jenkins had the honour, and as he stood up to his ball I whispered in his ear, "Set y'ursel' square to mak' to drive the burn, *but be short.*" He did as I wanted, and just as I thocht he would after talking to young Jock Gilkison his caddie. Mister Johnstone squares himself to do the same, but drives the burn a'thegither, which was just what I wanted. Mr. Jenkins played the odds wi' the cleek, cannily down the face o' the burn, till nicely in under the Bishop's sheed. Mr. Johnstone, he crosses the burn and finds himsel' in amongst the rashes at the Springs in three fect of watter, for, as ye ken, and as Jock Gilkison might ha' telled him, the Springs never freeze even in the keenest frost.'

'Oh! Wattie,' came the call from a corner o' the room; 'you an elder o' the kirk to try on such wilfu' deception! What would the minister have said had he been there?'

'Deception d'ye call it? I call it guid fair gowffing, and I'm maist certain the minister would have dune the same himsel'. Besides, knowledge o' the green under all circumstances must be taken advantage of.'

'That remark,' said Sandy Wilson, the schoolmaster, would seem to apply more to folks than to links, for anybody that knew anything at all might have known you were up to mischief the moment you made such a proposal.'

'Ay! ay! just say, Mr. Wilson, I have nae doot, but it would be a pity of us a' if we never larned anything after we left the school, ye ken. And now, not to be interrupted, I may say that

when Mr. Johnstone jumped the burn he assumed a kind o' sweerin' like expression, but deil the word he spak' a' the same. The ball was nowhere to be seen at first, but at length Jock Gilkison got his eye on it juist close by the root o' a rash bush, in twa feet o' water. Twa' or three splashes at it were made wi' the iron, but it stuck to the dub like a limpet to a rock and so he fain had to lift it and gi'e up the hole, for he had na the ghaist o' a chance.

'Oh! Wattie,' said the schoolmaster, who was a fellow elder, 'what a gran' man ye would have made at that game they play on the race course, wi' the three thimbles and a pea.'

'And wha said I wadna, deid moneys the time, I have made an honest saxpence at the race times when I was a caddie at Musselburgh, lettin' the country lads try to prick the loop in an auld piece o' string; and fair work, too, for the links were aye shut when the races were on, and we could make naething at the carrying. Hang it a'! Mr. Wilson; ye dinna mean to say that its no' all fair in gowff, so long as you comply with the rules?'

'Yes, but, Wattie, you know you took a rather contemptible advantage of your superior knowledge as green-keeper.'

'No, I didna', I merely offered to act as, what ye call it, tutor to Mr. Jenkins, jist as ye to the Laird's bairns. Jist let me finish my story.'

'Ay! ay!' came the friendly interruptions. 'Do not, Dominie, spoil a good story by preaching morality in the parish of Powbank,' said Bailie Nicholson from Glasgow.

'Keep your cane for the bairns, Sandy Wilson,' said Captain McNab, o' the *Three Bells* schooner, who had just come off a long voyage.

'Weel,' said Wattie, thus encouraged, 'Mr. Jenkins, he had the honour again, and though I dinna say he plays a losing game badly, but, like most other folks, he plays a winning game *extra weel*. "Dinna try to over drive your ball?" says I to him. "Keep your temper and play your best in judgment." He did so; and Mr. Johnstone, as I expected, for his temper was raised I could plainly perceive, he drove wild and was amongst the brentweed by the sea. The maist I wanted for that hole was "a half," but, of course, if we could win it so much the better. He played the odds, but failed to get his ball clear, and to make a story short, gentlemen, about that hole, they were well in the

putting green in four. I could ha' sworn it would have proved a halved hole, but Mr. Jenkins, wi' a lang "steal," holed oot in five, and Mr. Johnstone missed his putt, the ball runnin' roun' the hole mouth.

'So we had the honour again and, as ye will say, by this time a wee bit o' a start. But thirteen holes makes a lang course, and we didna' need to be too confident. We crossed the Pyrenees Hills, as the sand-knowies are called, Mr. Johnstone in four and Mr. Jenkins in five, and we lost that hole, as I fully expected we would. Its champion play ye aye want to cross the Pyrenees with no matter what may be the condition of the green. Mr. Johnstone now determined evidently to show us some real good champion work, and drove his ball long and beautiful for the fifth hole, keeping to the right o' the big sandy peak that ye ken guards the gap facing the puttin' green. "Keep well to the left," says I to Mr. Jenkins, and ye'll find ye'll be right. It was a queer course to tak', but I kenned fine what I was doin'. It was jist as I thought. His ball rattled along the ice, which lay in the hollows frae end to end, like a wee curling stone, and lay within a cleck shot o't' green. As I have tauld ye, the whole links had been lying fu' o' watter when the frost came in, and so was a sheet o' ice.'

'I never heerd o' sic' villany in ma' life,' began the school-master again, 'and from a ruling elder o' the kirk, tae. I maist couldna' ha' believed it. I wunner what the minister wo'd say to the like o' that if he kenned o't.'

'Oh! I'll tell ye *what he said, Sandy, my man*, if ye would like to ken. He said, anyway, to thrash a Fifer was an honest eneuch way, and noo that I think o't ye were a Saint Andrew's University man yersel' once for a year or twa. Gie me a guid Edinburgh College man, like our ain Mister Meiklejohn, against a' your stockit kind frae your auld grey toun. By ma feth, they can both gowff and preach. I'll appeal to the gentlemen present if a' that I did was na' fair.'

'Quite fair! Wattie, quite fair! go on!' came the call.

'Weel, as I was saying, a guid cleck shot brought Mr. Jenkins on the puttin' green and deid in three. Medal play you will say, ay, and *guid* medal play! There was nothing for it in the end but for Mr. Johnstone to try a lang steal for a half in the end, and, though he played well, he failed. Ye should have seen the scowl he gied me as he picked up his ball. We halved the next, halved the next again.

'We were now three up and sax to play, so that Mr. Johnstone had to do his verra best to win. He drove well again, and so did Mr. Jenkins here, but, Mr. Jenkins, I maun tell ye here to your face your short play was anything but first-rate.'

'I do not believe so, but ye need not remind me of it; ye said so in not very choice langedge at the time,' said Jenkins, thus appealed to, and who felt himself quite the hero.

'Words no' verra becoming an elder o' the kirk, I believe,' growled Sandy Wilson from the corner of the room.

'Weel! weel! they were becoming the occasion, anyway, and the Scriptures themsel' say that the richt thing should be in the richt place, and, as I was going to observe to ye, Mr. Jenkins made a mess o' things a'thegither, and fozzled his putt, his only chance o' halving the hole, so we were now twa up and five to play, so that we hid things pretty richt as we bent at the far end o' the links to finish the game. Our first hole in the road hame was halved in six, which was guid play for naeboddy, but, of course, in our favour as we were now three up and four to play, and Mr. Johnstone was determined that we wouldna' get dormy. He played a real good plucky game, I must say that, but the most he could make of it was a half, for Mr. Jenkins was early on the green and wonderful lucky in the puttin'. With the game two up and three to play, things were gettin' a wee bit serious, but I kenned a nice road hame for my man gin' a' things failed. Mr. Johnstone was not to be denied, and playing with great caution he was well on the green again, and, to my sorrow, he knocked off one of the two holes. This left us wi' bit a sma' lead, indeed, under ordinary circumstances, but we were hopeful as things were. The short "hole o' cross" was taken a' wi' the cleek and halved in five each, which left us with the long hole for hame, and to which Mr. Johnstone had now to try and halve the match. His drivin' of course he relied on, but I kenned a short cut. The green, as I was telling ye, was full o' watter when the frost came, and the lang meadow was jist a big curling pond. Mr. Jenkins drove in the line o' the meadow as directed, and went away swirling along the ice, raising a wee bit squirt o' watter as it ran. It was a longer ball than Mr. Johnstone's, so naething would do him but he would drive along the meadow the next time also. Mr. Jenkins' ball lay on the ice after his first drive, and he went in and played it off grandly, which, when Mr. Johnstone cam' to play his third stroke, his ball being on the ice wi' jist an inch o' thaw watter over it, made him say to

himself, "I think I may venture on the ice, too." Now the ice at the bottom o' the meadow, as curlers ken, is never very strong, and wi' three days thaw was a wee bit rotten, besides, Mr. Johnstone weighs four stone more than his opponent. Boldly he steppit it down to the edge wi' the long spoon in his han', when *crash! crash!* in he went to the boot heids. This was na' very pleasing to begin with, but he was not to be beat. He stepped on again more cautiously, and I was jist thinking it was all up wi' us when he swung his club, when *crash!* in he went up to the knees. To strike the ball, which was the level of his knees, with any effect was impossible; indeed, it was difficult to strike it at all, and, losing his temper, he missed it altogether. Jock Gilkison reached him oot the cleek, and he kind o' scraped the ball into the bank, but it was far too late. As Mr. Jenkins was dead in four and holed oot in five, so that he fairly beat the Champion over the Powbank course without a shade of odds, and I have some o' the whiskey left, gentlemen, as my share o' the work.'

'Bonnie work for an elder o' the kirk,' growled Sandy Wilson, as he lifted his hat and made for the door, just as the maid appeared to answer the bell to bring a fresh supply of spirits and hot water to drink the health o' Wattie Anderson, and 'The man that beat the Champion.'

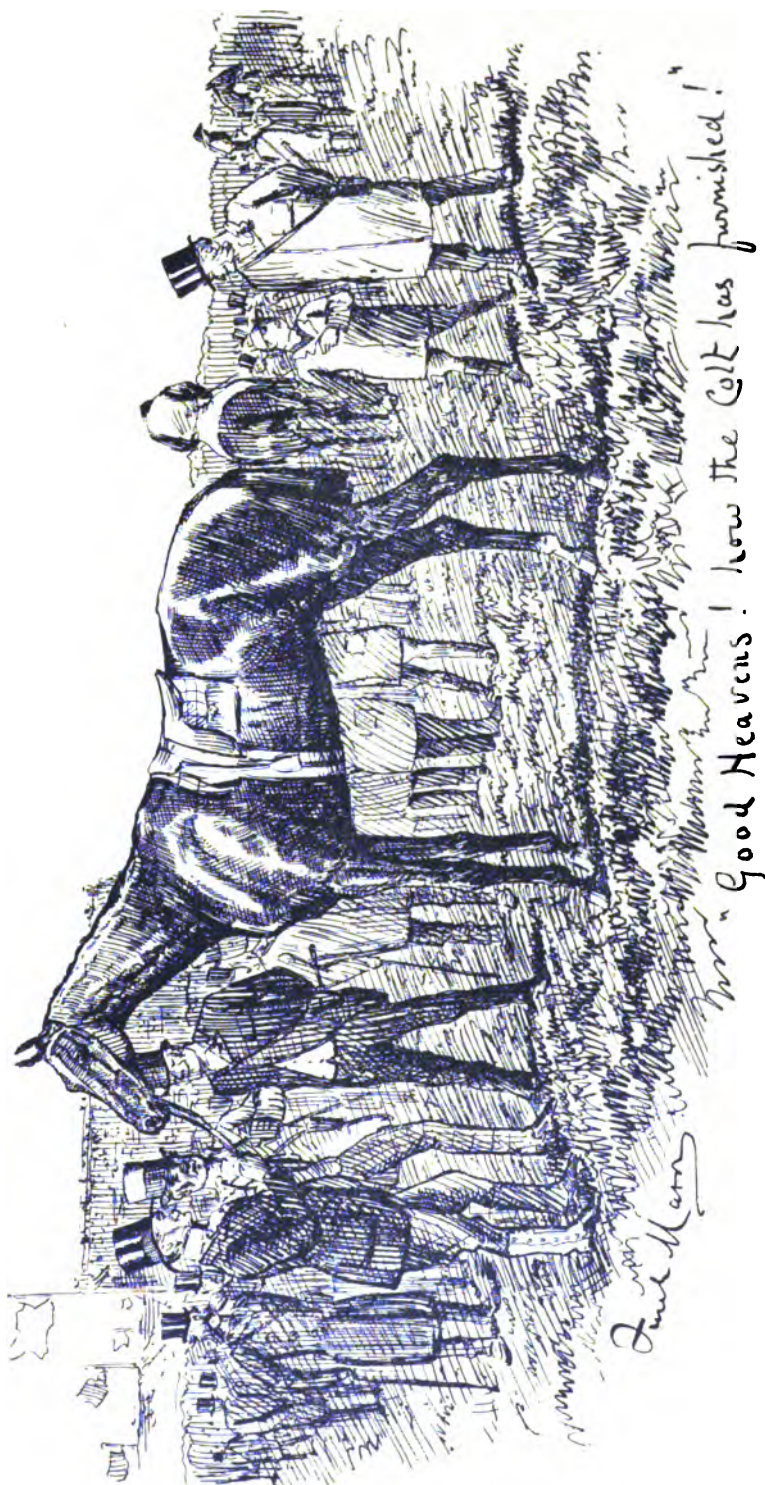
A STABLE SECRET

By MAURICE NOEL.

IT happened one winter, that I was living alone in the country, and wondering how I should enjoy Christmas in my own society. I did not hanker after the orthodox festivities of the season, and yet hardly looked forward to keeping Christmas Day alone; so I was not sorry when a friend, also a bachelor, who lived within an easy ride of me, asked me to dine with him on that day.

He had been for many years a trainer, but had given up the business, and only kept a few crocks of his own with which he amused himself by running at the local meetings.

He had trained for me in past days, before the times got bad, and landowners lost most of their rents, and I used often to



Just Mary
Good Heavens! how the Colt has furnished!

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trot over to his place, look round his stable, and talk of old times.

It was on one of these occasions that he suggested the dinner. 'I have known you a long time, sir,' he said, 'and I dare say you'll not think it a liberty. You have no one staying with you, and Christmas Day ought not to be spent alone, so if you'll come over and do a bit of Christmassing with me, I'll give you a good bottle of wine and an undeniable cigar.

I cordially accepted the invitation, for old Joe Downey was capital company, and though his turf morality may have been no better than his neighbours, he had always treated me well, and that's as much as one need trouble himself about.

So on Christmas evening I got on my horse and trotted over. It was very cold, and the snow was beginning to powder down in a steady way that looked like business. Regular Christmas weather, and no mistake!

I wasn't sorry to see my horse comfortably boxed up, and to warm my hands in the snug little room in which Downey was waiting for me. Dinner was punctual and excellent, and although the traditional turkey and plum pudding made their appearance, a barrel of oysters fresh from town, and a couple of woodcocks done to a turn, occupied most of our attention.

'Always wash down woodcock with burgundy,' observed Downey, as he passed me the bottle. 'This is chambertin.'

'What, after chablis and champagne! Do you think I'm a belted cruiser?'

Downey pointed to the holly and mistletoe on the mantelpiece.

'We only get Christmas once a year,' he said.

I *did* think better of Downey than that he would reel off such a conventional saying, and was about to retort that I saw no reason for making oneself unwell once a-year, when I got a whiff of the burgundy,—it was so tempting, that I gave myself a bumper, and had no cause to regret it.

I rather wondered whether my host would break out with a cake at dessert. He did! an enormous affair, with a fairy in rudimentary attire,—it's a wonder the London County Council hadn't interfered with her publication. He wanted me to sample his '63 port. 'No thank you,' said I, 'I won't change foxes, this chambertin just suits me.'

'If you've settled on to the line,' said my host, 'I won't try to turn you, but port for me, if you please.'

As we sat in that comfortable old room, each in his arm chair before the fire, it was additionally cosy to hear the wind getting up outside, and the soft flutter of the snow against the window panes.

'You must have had some curious experiences, Downey,' said I, 'during the many years you kept a training stable.'

Downey's eyes twinkled as I made this remark, but he said nothing. I had often thought I should like to catch him in a confidential mood, and it seemed to me that now, if ever, was the time to draw him out. I even found myself descending to the use of the argument of the season.

'Come, Downey, this is Christmas night—just the time for a yarn, you know. Tell me one of your dead and gone stable secrets. It can do you no harm, now, and would interest me immensely.'

Downey gave me a glance in which there was some amusement, and a good deal of cunning. He settled himself still more comfortably in his chair, and softly rubbed his hands. I gave him time.

At last, speaking very slowly, he said, 'I don't know but what I *could* tell you a story; if I did you would be the only one who has ever heard it. Really,' he added, 'this is, as you say, a suitable occasion, and I know you will not repeat what I tell you—not till I'm dead and gone, at any rate.'

Of course I promised, and he continued, 'I don't quite know what you'll think of me when you hear how I once took in the whole crowd—jockeys, bookies, public, and all! I don't think much of myself sometimes, when I call it to mind, but please recollect that it happened many years ago, when turf morality was even lower than it is now (not saying much for it, eh?), and I don't think many of those I rubbed against would have acted better than I did if they had had my opportunity.'

'Come, Downey,' I cried, 'no apologies. You were all pretty *smart*, as the Yankees call it, in those days, but you've repented, of course, and grown up a good boy, so canter along.'

'Well,' remarked Downey, as he rose and went to the mantelpiece, 'I believe there was room for improvement. I'll put this box of cigars at your elbow, and, if you'll mix yourself a glass of hot punch, I'll take the bandages off a bit of my past life.'

'Can you remember Day Star? No, I suppose not, but he

was a noted sire when I first began racing, and one of the best colts I ever owned was by him. Day Star was a bright bay with black points, one white foot, and a white star on the forehead. Dozens of horses like that you'll say. So there are, but the star on the forehead was of a peculiar shape: more like a Comet than a star. Most of his stock were marked the same way. My colt was for one, and I called him Comet in consequence.

'He had won several races as a two-year-old, and I expected great things of him. The first time he ran as a three-year-old he did too well—better than I intended, in fact—for he was so full of running at the finish that he overpowered the boy and nearly won—not at all what I intended, as I was keeping him for a big handicap.

'When the weights for this came out I found my colt had been very severely treated by the handicappers, indeed, they were so hard upon him that I was in two minds about accepting. The ring thought he was out of it, and knocked him to 50 to 1. The price was tempting enough, but I didn't dare to pencil much down. We tried Comet at the weight he would have to carry, but he tired under it; in fact, it was asking him to do a bit too much. However, we went on with his preparation and hoped for the best.

'About a fortnight before the race I had to go over to Paris to a brother who was living there, and during my visit I attended a race meeting. They didn't do much racing over there in those days, not like they do now, and I wasn't much interested; but just as I was thinking of leaving, my attention was attracted by a horse passing close to me on the way up to take his canter, I rubbed my eyes and looked again. He was exactly like my own horse Comet. There was the same white foot, and the same shaped star on the forehead. The likeness was indeed extraordinary; seen together, one might doubtless make out differences between them; but apart, I might have been taken in myself.

'When the flag fell I watched the strange horse closely. He had the same kind of action as Comet, the same long, raking stride, and was evidently as fit as hands could make him. He won as he liked, and I followed him into the paddock to make some enquiries. I found he belonged to a French Marquess who had picked up his stud in England, but had done so badly at the game of racing that he was giving it up, and all his horses

were for sale, including the animal I had just seen win. I was not surprised to learn that the latter was by Day Star, and they told me he had done very well and was, in fact, the pick of the basket. He was just four off, and, as I could see for myself, was in rare condition. All this was interesting, of course, but I couldn't stay to see him run next day as I had arranged to go home—and home I went. The first thing I did on my return was to give Comet another trial. You would hardly believe how much he had improved. He ran quite a different horse and galloped away from old Clockwork, although the latter had a fine turn of speed and could stay like a boy in a bunshop. This was good enough, and I hurried up to town and got the money on before the result of the trial leaked out, which, by the way, it very soon did.

'I met the handicapper a few days afterwards. "Well, Downey," he said, "I hear your colt won a grand trial, and that you've been piling the money on; so he wasn't so badly treated after all."

"No, sir," said I, "though I thought you had been rather hard on him I must say, and so did the bookies, but it seems you know more about it than we do, now." He went off quite pleased.

'The day before the race I told my head man that I should travel up with the colt myself, and after the race take him on to attend a meeting the other side of London. He didn't seem pleased, and wondered he had heard nothing about it before.

"Well, I entered him long ago," said I, "but have only just made up my mind to run him. You see he's in such grand form just now."

"Yes," he said, "I can't quite make out that form. I fancy the weight, when we tried him ——"

"Nonsense," I cried, "the weights were all right—not a soul touched them but myself. By the way, I put a tenner on for you at fifties to one, so you'll have a nice little bit if he wins to-morrow."

"Thank you, sir," he replied, "I shall be very pleased if he does, and almost as much surprised."

'As he went off I called after him, "Tell Isaac he is to take the colt to-morrow; we can look after him between us, and I don't want a boy."

'Next morning, the box I had ordered was all ready at the station, and we safely reached our destination.

"Come, Isaac," said I, "whilst they are getting the box into the siding, we'll drink success to Comet;" and I led the way to the refreshment room. After we had finished, we went to take the horse out of the box. As we neared the latter, Isaac gave a start and a cry.

"What's the matter, Isaac?"

"Matter!" he cried, "they've taken off the wrong box!"

"Can't have done that," said I.

"They have! we picked up another box at Modbury, and they've taken that one off, and sent Comet on to London. Be darned if they haven't!"

Isaac was wildly excited, and poured out his words in a stream.

"Nonsense! you must have made a mistake about the box;" said I, "look there!" at that moment the porter threw open the doors of the box—"That's our colt right enough, don't you know my clothing yet?"

"Don't answer me," I continued, "but lead the horse out, and we'll go straight up to the course."

I spoke sharply, for Isaac looked half dazed. As I was standing in the paddock, an hour or two later, a trainer came up to me. "Well, Downey," said he, "they tell me you've a real good thing, shall I have a bit on?"

"I shall know more about it," I answered, "a few minutes after the flag falls. Come to me then."

At this moment Isaac came up with the colt ready saddled.

"That's Comet, is it?" said my friend, "I remember that curious white blaze on the forehead, but, good Heavens! how the colt has furnished!"

"Ah," said I, "all Day Star's stock are forward, as you know;" then, as I saw the trainer's hand instinctively wander towards the colt's mouth, I added quietly, "Better take care, he's rather handy with his teeth. It isn't a good thing to pull 'em about, just before they go to the post. He's excited enough already. Have a cigar?"

I walked off with my friend, and we watched the race together. My horse lay back most of the journey, and when I saw him coming along in earnest, he had so much to make up that I didn't feel at all comfortable. My friend, who was watching them through his glasses, kept talking the whole time. "The favourite leads, I see, and your colt is some way behind, Downey, but he's full of running. He's getting up fast now, but

the weight must stop him when it comes to the pinch. Yes, I'm right, his jockey has begun to ride him already. Good Heavens, how gamely he answers! He's racing up to the leaders, *racing*, I tell you. He's challenging the favourite, and drawing level now. He'll win—he'll win! D—n it, he *has* won!"

'And so he had—he only got his head in front just on the post, but that was enough to land me the best stake I ever pulled out of the ring.

'Ah,' concluded Downey, as he glanced at me out of the corner of his eye, 'racing is a queer game, we need not be French Marquesses in order to find that out.'

'You certainly did 'em all round,' said I, as I saw Downey was expecting a remark.

'Why yes,' he replied, 'I began by telling you that.'

'Of course it was the French horse that won; but you ran a fearful risk. You would have been warned off the turf for ever and a day if they had found you out, and I hardly know how you escaped.'

'I was lucky all through,' replied Downey. 'It was a good move, to begin with, letting Comet win his second trial—prevented their talking so much afterwards.'

'I suppose you played "cut and shuffle" with the weights?'

'Yes, I slipped every bit of lead that Comet ought to have carried in with old Clockwork's allowance. I wonder the old horse travelled as well as he did!'

'You say the result of the trial soon leaked out—you were not surprised at that I suppose?'

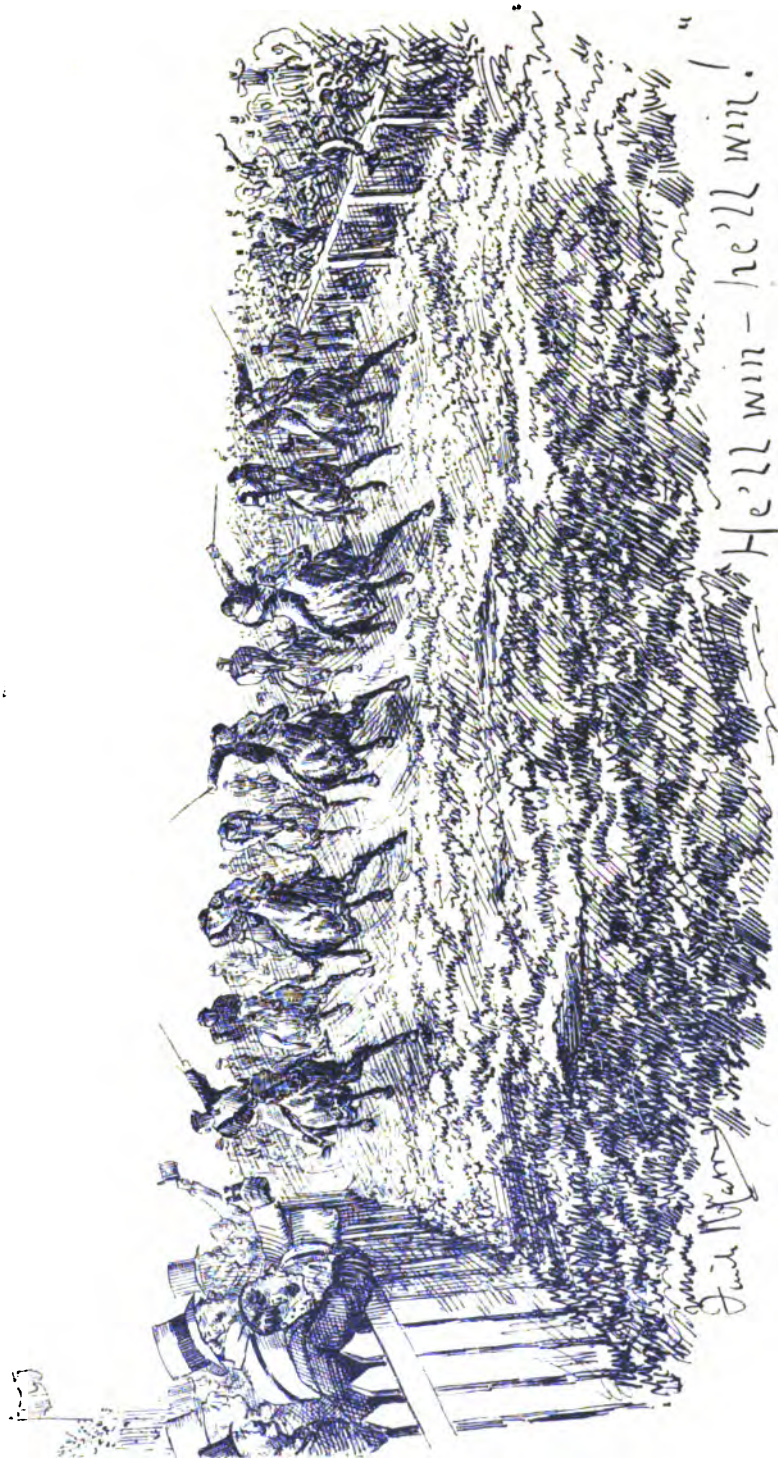
'Not at all; I told Billy Gabbs about it *in strict confidence*, and knew that was as good as publishing it in the "*Sportsman*."

'But I can't understand your own men being taken in.'

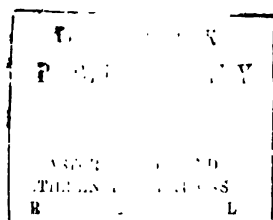
'That was the danger? but old Isaac was the only one who set eyes on the foreigner. I had to square him, of course, and picked him out because I knew he wanted to join some relations who had gone to America, and was only prevented from doing so by want of money. I paid his passage and bought him into the business, besides allowing him 100*l.* a year so long, and so long only, as he kept his tongue quiet. We settled the whole matter as we walked to the course from the station. Poor fellow, he only lived a few years to enjoy his annuity.

'What became of the French horse?'

'I'll tell you. My brother bought him for me according to my instructions, saw that he did the necessary work, brought him



He'll win - he'll win!



to London, and sent him down to Modbury on the morning of the race. There we picked him up, as you know, and Isaac was not mistaken about the boxes, for Comet went right on to London, where I picked him up within a few hours after winning the big race with his double. I could not run the risk of keeping the latter in England, so he returned to the continent at once. Comet came home with me the next day after cleverly winning a small race at the meeting I have alluded to. This alone was enough to disarm suspicion, if any existed. Plenty of knowing ones had seen, or *thought* they had seen, the same horse win on two consecutive days, and it could be proved, if necessary, that Isaac and I took Comet away from my stable, and brought him back to it.'

... 'But had the jockey no suspicion?'

'The jockey who rode for me in the big race, had never ridden for me before, and did not get the mount on Comet when the latter won the next day. No sir, I thought it all out rather carefully.'

'Well,' said I, changing the conversation, as I felt I could hardly congratulate Mr. Downey on his success, 'I'm much obliged to you for your story, and I think it is about time for me to be trotting back.'

'Would you mind stepping this way,' said my host, 'I want to show you something.' I followed him into the hall, and up the stairs. 'There,' said he, as he threw open the door of a snug bedroom in which a fire was burning cheerfully, 'Look at that, and then at this.'

He drew the curtain, and I saw the snow driving against the window-panes. I thought it was coming on,' he added, 'and had a room prepared for you. Don't you think you had better stop?'

I did not require much pressing. As I was undressing in that comfortable room (after some more whiskey punch) I caught sight of my face in the glass, and shook my head sagaciously. 'My fren,' said I, 'I congarrulate you on havin' leff off racin'—monsus poor sorer game!'

SENSATIONAL CRICKET IN 1893.

By SOMERVILLE GIBNEY.

AS I sit down to write the glorious summer of 1893 has come to an end, and cricket is over for another year; and what a summer it has been! The only persons who have had any cause to complain have been the ground-men and bowlers, and even they have done great things, in spite of difficulties; for, taking this season all through, good wickets have been far in excess of bad ones, and, as I shall show later on, big things with the ball have rivalled big things with the bat. Of course, no one with any knowledge of the game will attempt to deny that it has been a batsman's season, and for that very reason it has been a popular season; the average cricket crowd, though they may thoroughly appreciate smart fielding and clever bowling to the full, enjoy lively hitting more, and deem it more interesting to watch, and in this respect they have been indulged to the top of their bent during the last months. The season has helped forward the game in another way: the weather has been so fine that it was a pleasure to sit in the open and watch the matches, big crowds have been the result, and interest in the game has increased all through the country to a tremendous extent, so that the prospects of the game have never been in a more healthy condition than at the present moment.

But to leave generalities for the sensational elements of the past season, and in county cricket first, for that, after all, holds first place among English lovers of the game. Undoubtedly the great sensation has been the fall of Surrey from the championship to the fifth place. Certainly Lohmann has unfortunately been unable to take his place in the team, but then, good cricketer as he is, his absence could hardly have entirely accounted for the downfall. There must be other reasons somewhere, which the Committee of the Club will have to reckon with. Yorkshire have gone ahead in a surprising way, and, by scoring nine points against their nearest rival, Lancashire's four, have put the question of their right to the championship beyond a doubt. Notts, too, has gone down to sixth place, and this when their leading batsmen, Gunn and

Shrewsbury, have been doing so well. Has the usual stone-wall description of play of the team anything to do with this? In the seventy-two county matches played, 49,172 runs were made for the loss of 2412 wickets, giving an average of 20·932 runs per wicket, which seems to show how favourable the grounds have been for run-getting. Notts, curiously enough, made the highest and lowest score for an innings in the county contests, the former being 674 against Sussex, and the latter 38 against Yorkshire.

As a matter of curiosity, I have followed the doings of the season as reported in one paper, which notices the better class of cricket, and I find that between the 1st of May and the 31st of August there have been 173 innings of over 300, forty-two of over 400, seven of over 500, two of over 600, and one of over 800; and I also find that the week most productive of centuries was that ending on the 3rd of June, when thirty-four were reported; the succeeding one, ending on the 10th of June, ran it close, being credited with thirty-three, and yet the two weeks were ones in which a lot of rain fell, and in which the light was not always good. The week ending on the 8th of July is responsible for thirty-one centuries, but after this the capacity for run-making fell off, and during the remainder of the season in no week is more than twenty-four reported.

As this has been such an exceptionally run-getting season, it will not be out of place to take a glance at some of the larger scores. The one that stands out above all the rest was made in the Oxford and Cambridge Past and Present *v.* The Australians, on the 31st of July and the 1st and 2nd of August, when our visitors totalled 843 against the 'Varsity men's 191 and 82 for one wicket. By this gigantic score three previous records were broken—first, that of the Australians in England, the best hitherto having been 643 made by them against Sussex in 1882; second, that of first-class cricket in England, the previous best having been 703, made by Cambridge University *v.* Sussex in 1890; and, third, in all first-class cricket, overtopping the 803 made by Non-Smokers *v.* Smokers in Melbourne in 1887. It is only fair to say that the bowling of the 'Varsity men was very weak, ten of their number going on to try and get wickets. It was remarkable how high the scores ran in the early matches at Cambridge and Oxford. In the Freshman's match at Cambridge on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of May, F. S. Jackson's side scored 429, and in the Senior match at Oxford on the same date A. J.

Boger's side made 551, while in the Oxford Freshman's match on the 4th, 5th, and 6th of May, Brain's side made 455 and Palairt's 463, in which was the 230 of F. G. H. Clayton; and on the 11th, 12th, and 13th of May the Oxford Eleven made 533 against the 481 of the next sixteen. But it must be remembered that in all these matches there was no professional bowling. In the Notts and Sussex match on the 8th, 9th, and 10th of June, the former made the 674 already mentioned, to which Shrewsbury contributed 164, Gunn 156, and Barnes 102. Sussex replied with 221 and 264 for six wickets, W. L. Murdock making 75 and 61. This 674 is only short by 24 of the record score in first-class county matches, made in 1888 by Surrey *v.* Sussex. On the 19th and 20th of June I Zingari made 337 for seven wickets, to which the Household Brigade replied with 339 for three wickets. When Guernsey Garrison played Hampshire Rovers on the 22nd and 23rd of June they made 126 and 106 to their opponents' 500 (Captain Carpenter 170). On the 22nd of July Gloucester played Birmingham, and made 98 while the latter made 210 for no wickets (D. Docker 105, Major 103, both not out). For in-and-out form, look at the match, Cambridgeshire *v.* Norfolk, on the 27th and 28th of July, when Cambridgeshire made 39 and 436 for nine wickets, while Norfolk piled up 264. Towards the end of the season, on the 28th and 29th of August, Incogniti made 303, and their opponents, United Service, answered with 603 for nine wickets (Captain Dyson 104, A. H. Denham 239). After big scoring, quick scoring is always appreciated by the crowd, and they had a treat on the 28th and 29th of August in the Yorkshire and M.C.C. match, when F. S. Jackson and E. Smith hit off the 65 runs necessary to the Yorkshire victory in sixteen minutes. On the 13th of May the N.C. Officers and Sappers, R.E., made 60 against their Officers, who, in reply, scored 447 for nine wickets (F. G. Guggisberg 118, and P. Maud 72, making 206 in exactly an hour, only ten of their hits being boundaries. When, on the 27th of May, the officers of Le Marchant Barracks played the Officers of the Devizes Yeomanry, they made 219 in an hour and twenty minutes, the first 60 being made in thirteen minutes, and the 100 in thirty. East Gloucestershire, playing Cirencester on the 6th of July, made 315 in two hours and ten minutes (H. G. Bennett 121, H. Jessop 102, made in fifty-six minutes). And now a glance on the other side of the picture. On the 18th of May the 2nd Black Watch scored 239 against

the 23 of Glasgow University, in which were six ducks. But perhaps the most remarkable instance in this line was the Yorkshire and Surrey match, played at Sheffield on the 12th and 13th of June, which was over in six hours, only 320 runs being made, the former winning by 58, the score being Yorkshire 98 and 91, Surrey 72 and 59. Wardall took nine wickets for 19, and Hurst eight for 56. When M.C.C. and Ground played Brighton College on the 15th June they made 241, to which the boys replied with 21 and 34, the highest individual score in which was 8. When Yorkshire beat Notts on the 13th and 14th of July they made 182, and Notts 124 and 38, Sherwin's 10 being the only double figure in the latter. The Lancashire and Yorkshire match on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of August will be remembered for small scores—Lancashire 64 and 50, Yorkshire 58 and 51, losing by 5 runs. But in county cricket, though only among the second class, the Bucks and Bedfordshire match on the 17th of July bears off the palm, for it only required four and a half hours to bring the contest to a conclusion—Bedfordshire 45, six wickets down for 12 runs, and 36, when nine wickets were down for 10 runs; Bucks 58 and 25 for two wickets. A country match in Lincolnshire is worthy of note. The Bishop's Hostel, Lincoln, played Caythorpe on the 3rd of June, and, scoring 170 for five wickets, declared their innings closed. Caythorpe answered with 8 runs, 3 of which were extras.

But it is time to note the doings of the bowlers. This year has certainly seen an advancement in lob-bowling, as exemplified by Humphrey when, in the Sussex and Notts match on the 11th, 12th, and 13th of May he took six wickets for 37 runs; and in the Sussex and Surrey match on the 24th, 25th, and 26th of July, when Sussex beat Surrey for the first time since 1885 by 129 runs, he took twelve wickets for 136. In the second innings of the Surrey and Warwickshire match, on the 8th and 9th of May, Richardson, for the former, bowled remarkably; his analysis read—thirteen overs, three maidens forty-four runs, seven wickets. He bowled Richards, a few balls later Shilton was caught off him at cover-point, the two succeeding balls bowled Pallett and Whitehead (the hat-trick being thus performed), and the fifth ball of the over bowled Creswell—eight balls secured five wickets. When Surrey was playing Cambridge University on the 5th, 6th, and 7th of June, in the second innings of the latter Lockwood took eight wickets for

33, performing the hat-trick ; and on the 3rd of June, in the Notts and Somersetshire match, in the second innings of the latter Shacklock, in his tenth over, got four wickets ; that morning he bowled fourteen overs, three balls, six maidens, twenty-two runs, six wickets. In smaller matches there have also been some sensational bowling feats ; for instance, on the 16th of May Mr. John Lansdowne, bowling for Littleport against Little Downham, took six wickets with seven consecutive balls. The last ball of one over secured a wicket, four men fell victims in the following over, and his first ball of the next over proved fatal to another. On the 17th of July Mr. Sedgfield, playing for Glyn, Mills and Co.'s Bank *v.* Brown, Shipley and Co., captured all ten wickets, clean bowling the last four with consecutive balls ; and on Glyn's going in to bat, two more men were bowled in succession, making six wickets in six balls. On the 19th of August, in Birkenhead Victoria *v.* Southern of Liverpool, Mr. Sprout, for former, delivered one over four balls ; with the last eight he took eight wickets for no runs. Some years ago he took six wickets for no runs. And on the 2nd of September, in a match Mr. Hadwen's Eleven *v.* Mr. Wheatley's, the analysis of Shaw, of Rastrick, read as follows : six overs, five maidens, two runs, ten wickets ; the last six were taken with consecutive balls, five clean bowled. I had almost omitted to mention George Giffen's analysis in the Australian and Gloucestershire match on the 15th, 16th, and 17th of May, when the former made 503 (G. Giffen 180), which read as follows : six overs, three balls, three maidens, eleven runs, seven wickets.

Some of the finishes last season were very exciting. In the Yorks and Notts Colts match, on the 1st and 2nd of May, the former won, within three minutes of time, by 9 runs, and on the 11th and 12th of May M.C.C. beat Lancashire by one wicket. The M.C.C. and Australians, on the 18th, 19th, and 20th of May, was close, and one of the best matches ever played at Lords—M.C.C. 424 (Flowers 130, F. Marchant 103), Australians 243 and, following on, 347, leaving M.C.C. 167 to win ; four wickets were down for 88, and at last 40 runs were wanted, and twenty minutes remained for play ; eventually it was drawn, M.C.C. requiring 13 runs, and having two wickets in hand. Sherwin only allowed one bye in 590 runs. Sussex beat Gloucester on the 24th of May by 3 runs, Humphrey taking seven wickets for 30 runs in the second innings. The Austra-

lians beat Oxford University on the 3rd of June by 19 runs. On the 1st of June Major Maude's Eleven beat the Hampshire Hogs by 1 run. On the 10th of June, Highclere Castle played a tie with Newbury, 265 each. For Newbury, Palmer ran a short run, and A. B. Heath took their last three wickets in three balls. Another tie took place on the 1st of July between Clifton College and Clifton Club, 191 each. In the Gentlemen and Players match, on the 13th, 14th, and 15th of July, the latter won by 8 runs.

There have also been some genuine curiosities. In Middlesex *v.* Notts, on the 5th, 6th, and 7th of June (the former 327 and 304, the latter 301 and 273), E. A. Stoddart made 195, not out, and 124, two centuries in one match, which has only been accomplished by two other players—Grace has done it three times and G. Brann once, last year against Kent. On the 2nd of August Stoddart made 210 and F. R. Spofforth 60 for Hampstead *v.* Willesden, when the former's score was 483 and the latter's 83. It was for Hampstead that Stoddart made his gigantic score some years ago. On the 31st of May Weston Park played Sarisbury Green, twelve aside; Weston were all out for 50; Sarisbury made 49 with only five men out—the last six batsmen didn't make a run between them; and Weston won by a run. In Notts *v.* Gloucestershire, on the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th of June, C. W. Wright played a ball into his pad, and, taking it out, was given out 'handled ball.' In Oxford and Cambridge, on the 3rd, 4th, and 5th of July, Cambridge made 182. Oxford, with one wicket to fall, required five runs to save the follow on. Wilson and Brain, the Oxford batsmen, had a consultation, and, as the result, Wilson hardly guarded his wicket. Wells, for Cambridge, bowled a no ball, which went to the boundary; he then bowled a wide, which Brain covered, and followed this with another, which also went to the boundary; and the follow on was averted. The incident caused a good deal of discussion as to whether it was *good* cricket or not. In the Middlesex and Sussex match, on the 13th, 14th, and 15th of July, an incident occurred. A ball rebounded from Tait, the wicket-keeper's, hands, and knocked off the bails. Tait put one on, and Foley, the batsman, put on the other, when Henty, the umpire, gave him out. Murdock, however, made him come back, as there is no law against putting on a bail. On the 7th of August the Robinson family played their sixteenth annual match, against Flax Bourton, and won by seven wickets. In the

second innings of Notts, when playing Kent on the 12th of August, Jones and Shrewsbury went in and played for twenty-five minutes for 1 run, a highly interesting performance to watch, I should imagine.

And so the season of 1893 has run its course, and, as we sit dreaming beside our smoking-room fires, we can look back on it with real pleasure, and forward to 1894 with hope that it may prove as successful as its predecessor.

BAMBOOZLING A TOUT.

By C. DARCY FRIEL.

ABOUT ten o'clock on a lovely morning, towards the end of June, a smart dog-cart, driven by a young gentleman of unmistakably military appearance, dashed up to the door of Broomfield Lodge, a compact little training establishment on the outskirts of the famous Curragh of Kildare. A diminutive youth in groom's livery, who had been perched behind, was at the horse's head almost before he had stopped, and the driver leisurely descended. At the same moment appeared in the doorway the tall form of Jim Corbett, crack steeplechase jockey, trainer of racehorses, and gentleman. The two last-named avocations would seem somewhat irreconcilable, yet no one who knew Jim ever felt any difficulty of the kind. The man was a gentleman 'bred and born,' as they say in his country, and no pursuit which the pressure of poverty might have compelled him to follow could alter that fact.

'Mornin', Captain!' he shouted, in the rich brogue which he adopted in his merry moments, though when serious he spoke the most correct of English, 'it's yerself is the rale early bird, and no mistake.'

'Oh, do hold your tongue, Jim,' was the laughing response. 'I didn't get to bed till after four this morning, so how could I turn up in time?'

Corbett grinned.

"Six o'clock, sharp," the gentleman said, "divil a minute later." Faith, Captain, you're a jewel of an owner, but it's a poor job ye'd make of training. It's well you have me to look after your horses for you.'

'I wish you would look after me, now, and give me a drink. I must have swallowed a bushel of dust coming along that confounded road.'

'All right, Captain, I'll give you something that'll lay it. Phil!' he called, to a lanky individual in a sleeved waistcoat, who had made his appearance from the vicinity of the stables at the sound of the wheels, 'take Captain Blake's mare out, and give her a good rubbing-down—she looks warm. Then give her a drink of meal and water, and some corn afterwards—look alive!'

Phil led the mare round to the stables, followed by the small groom.

'Now, Captain,' said Corbett, as he led the way into a cosy little room, looking out on to a trim, well-kept lawn, 'what is it to be? Brandy-and-soda, or, better still, whisky? I've got some splendid old Wise's Cork—what d'ye say?'

'Oh! the whisky, by all means; and plenty of soda.'

Corbett bustled about, and in a brief space a big tumbler, filled with a hissing mixture, was placed before his visitor.

'I take my own prescription,' he said, as he helped himself to a similar dose, and placed a cigar-box on the table.

Captain Blake took a long and apparently satisfactory drink.

'A—h, that's capital!' he said, with a sigh of content.

'Yes,' Corbett assented, as he followed suit, 'tisn't a bad corpse-reviver, is it?'

'No, by Jove! Now,' said Blake, as he settled himself in a big, comfortable armchair, and lit a cigar, 'let's talk business—how's the colt?'

'Oh! famous; you should have been here to see him gallop this morning—he went like a bird. In another fortnight he'll be fit to run for a man's life.'

'If he can only win the Liverpool Cup it will do for me.'

'That, I think, he is sure to do—bar accident,' said Corbett, in a tone of conviction.

'But, look here, Jim,' said the Captain, 'we must manage this trial somehow, very soon. I should really like to know how good or how bad he is—can't you bring it off?'

'Well,' answered Corbett, slowly, 'it's been on my mind for long enough. Of course I've taken feelers at the horse in various ways, but for a reliable trial there's only one we can put alongside him, and that's Rover.'

'Ah! and everybody would know him a mile off.'

'Aye, five, for the matter of that. That white leg of his would betray him to every tout on the Curragh as far as their glasses could see him, and if the colt should beat him in a trial, good-bye to your chance of getting a decent price for your money.'

Blake tugged at his long moustache as if seeking inspiration.

'Then what's to be done? It would just set me on my feet if I could win a good stake over the Liverpool, but I can't do that unless I get some very long shots.'

'The best plan I can think of,' said Corbett, 'is this. There is some good galloping ground at my cousin O'Grady's place at Ardmany, about a dozen miles from here; we might smuggle the horses down there quietly, and no one be any the wiser.'

'Just the thing, if you can do it without being seen.'

'I think we can. Launcelot can be sent off by train in the daytime, as if he were going Dublin way, and the box slipped off at Ardmany station. Then Rover could walk over in the cool of the evening—it's odds against any one seeing him.'

'Nothing could be better,' said Blake; 'you're a born strategist, Jim.'

The trainer laughed.

'You must have all your wits about you to get over the thieves here. Well, suppose we call that settled; what day will suit you?'

'Oh, any day—the sooner the better.'

'Very well, say the day after to-morrow, then. I'll write to O'Grady to-night. Now, suppose we go and have a look at the noble animal.'

The loose box, in which the Liverpool Cup candidate, Launcelot, had his quarters, was at the extremity of the stable-yard. As the trainer and Captain Blake approached it a man came out, who, on seeing the visitor, stood still and saluted respectfully. This was Mr. Cornelius Murphy, or 'Con,' as he was invariably called, Corbett's factotum, or, in stable phrase, 'head lad.'

'Well, Con,' said the Captain; 'how is Launcelot?'

'Bloomin' as the flowers o' May, yer honour. He's searchin' every corner of his manger to see if be any chance he hasn't left a grain of corn; but divle a wan there is.'

'Bring him out, Con,' said Corbett.

The horse was led out, and walked round for inspection.

'By Jove! he's a picture!' said his owner, proudly.

Launcelot was, indeed, an animal that any one might have been proud to call his own. He was a dark-brown three-year-old colt, without a white hair on his body, standing nearly sixteen hands high. He was remarkably well furnished for his age, and in shape and action it was almost impossible to find a flaw in him. He had a beautiful head, and his neck was well set upon exquisite shoulders; a good back, and deep and powerful quarters. His legs and feet were clean and sound throughout, and looked like standing any amount of wear and tear. Taken altogether, he was a splendid sample of the thoroughbred.

As Blake moved closer to examine him, the colt launched out vigorously with his heels, and very nearly caught his owner on the face; only a sudden backward jump saved him. Corbett laughed outright, and it was evident that only Con's sense of the proprieties restrained him from following suit.

'It's full of his play he is, the darlint,' he observed, tranquilly.

'Play, do you call it?' said Blake, ruefully, as he picked up his hat, which his nimble spring had displaced; 'it would very likely have been an inquest if I hadn't been so quick.'

'That'll do now, Con,' said Corbett; 'you can shut him up again,' and the pair returned to the house.

It was then arranged that Blake should proceed to Ardmany on the following evening, so as to be ready for the trial next morning; and shortly afterwards he took leave of Corbett, and drove back to his barracks at Newbridge.

About noon next day Launcelot, in charge of his stable attendant, was duly boxed at Newbridge Railway Station, and any one who had cared to inquire would have been promptly informed that the Liverpool Cup horse was going to Dublin, and thence, it was confidently believed, to England, in order to be tried with some crack English racer. Corbett travelled by the same train in the guard's van, the horse-box being last of all. When Ardmany—which was the second station from Newbridge—was reached, the horse-box was quietly uncoupled and left behind, and just as the train was starting off again Corbett slipped from the van. So far, so good. No passenger by the train could have noticed anything.

Corbett's cousin, O'Grady, a fine specimen of the Irish gentleman farmer, received him with open arms, and was evidently overjoyed at the prospect of coming in for so rare a bit of sport. In the evening Blake made his appearance, and

was heartily welcomed, and later on Con arrived in charge of Rover.

After dinner the three men were seated near the open dining-room window, enjoying the cool breeze, and engaged in the consumption of cigars and liquids, when a servant came to say that Con wished to speak with Mr. Corbett as soon as possible.

'Oh, send him here,' said O'Grady. 'Something about the horses, I suppose—eh, Jim?'

'I should think so,' replied Corbett.

When the head lad entered the room he was looking very much put out.

'Well, Con, what is it?' asked his master. 'You look as if you had seen a ghost.'

Con tried the door to see that it was safely closed, and slowly approached.

'Faith, sir,' he said, in a most dismal tone, 'it's a dale worse nor that.'

There was a general smile.

'Worse than a ghost, Con?' said Blake. 'Then it must be bad. Well, out with it.'

'We're blown on intoirely, sir,' said Con, addressing his master; 'that thief o' the wurrd, Roddy Mac, is in the village.'

'Roddy Mac!' exclaimed Corbett. 'May the divil take him!'

'Amin to that,' said Con, devoutly.

'But who on earth is Roddy Mac?' asked Blake.

'The cliverest tout and the biggest divle in Ireland, Captain, and that's a big wurrd,' replied Con.

'Whew!' whistled Blake, 'a tout; then our plans must have leaked out.'

'So it would seem,' said Corbett, gloomily. 'If that scoundrel has got on our track we might just as well have had the trial on the middle of the Curragh in broad daylight. All our trouble is thrown away, I'm afraid.'

'Sure, sir,' said Con, 'it wouldn't be much of a sin to murther the villin—he's only a tout!' He spoke as if it might have been a weasel.

'Oh, don't talk nonsense!' said Corbett, crossly.

'Nonsense, is it?' said Con, indignantly. 'Just you or the Captain give me the wurrd, and divle a step he'll stir out of this alive.'

In spite of his annoyance, Blake could not help laughing, for Con was in deadly earnest.

'No, no, Con,' he said, 'we mustn't have anybody killed—not even a tout.'

'Much loss he'd be,' growled Con.

'Well,' interposed O'Grady, 'we may as well talk the matter over quietly; perhaps we may discover some means of outwitting this wonderful tout.'

Con shook his head, in silent but emphatic assertion that it could not be done.

'Could we not arrange for Rover to win the trial in any case?' suggested Blake. 'Then this rascal would be as wise as ever.'

'Yes, and so should we,' said Corbett. 'No, if we can't plan something before morning I shall send the horses home again. I'm not going to gratify that beast by letting him see even a bogus trial. That'll do now, Con,' he went on; 'we must talk the matter over, though I don't think it will be of much use.'

Con departed, looking exceedingly down in the mouth, and the little party endeavoured to pull themselves together. Do what they could, however, they were unable to regain their former good spirits. The totally unexpected advent of the tout had spoiled their plans, and put every one out of humour. No feasible scheme for throwing the fellow off the scent could be thought of, and at an early hour they dejectedly sought their beds.

Corbett tumbled and tossed about, puzzling his brains with futile plans, but not a wink of sleep could he get till about two in the morning, when he fell into an uneasy dose, from which he was aroused by a gentle tapping at his bedroom door.

'Who's there?' he called.

'It's me, sir—Con!' was the answer, in a low voice.

'What the devil do you want?'

'Whisht, sir, spake asy; I want to tell you something;' and opening the door very gently Con approached the bedside. 'I thought you wouldn't be asleep, sir—I couldn't get a wink myself—so I came to tell you that I've got it.'

'Got what—the nightmare?'

'No, sir; the idaya.'

'The devil you have! Well, that's a novelty, anyhow. What is it?'

Con stooped, and whispered a few words into his master's ear. He laughed heartily. 'Will that do, sir?'

'Splendid!' said Corbett. 'You're a jewel, Con.'

'I think we'll put the blinkers on him this time, sir.'

'I think so, too. Now be off, and call me at five sharp.'

At about six o'clock in the morning Corbett and Captain Blake, with their host, proceeded to the stables to witness the elucidation of Con's 'idaya.' On inquiring for him they were informed by Tom, the stable lad, that he had gone into the village nearly an hour before, and had not yet returned. While they were speculating as to the cause of his absence he appeared in sight, bearing under each arm a small parcel done up in brown paper. He laid these on the ground very carefully, and approached the group.

'Top o' the mornin', gentlemen,' was his salutation, as he touched his hat.

Blake and O'Grady, who had merely been told that Con had conceived some plan for discomfiting the enemy, were bursting with impatience.

'Now, Con, what is it?' they cried, simultaneously.

'Asy, gentlemen, asy a minute,' was the reply. 'Tom!' he said, to the boy, 'go into the house, and see if Lane isn't ready yet.'

Lane was the jockey who had been engaged to ride Rover in the trial, and who had arrived the night before. When the coast was clear Con opened the stable door.

'Now, gentlemen,' he said, 'I'll show ye what I mane.'

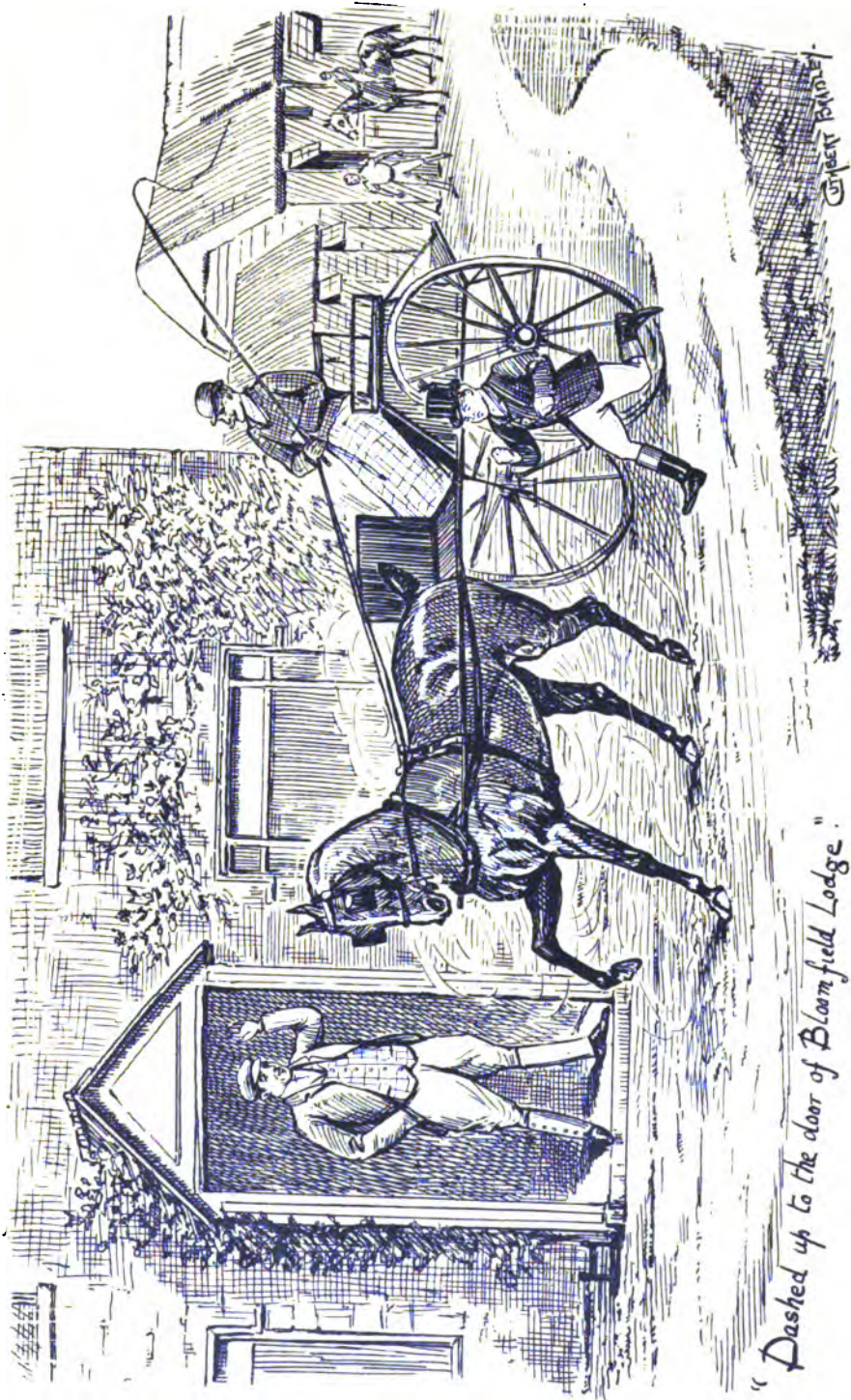
The horses were in adjacent stalls, and Con went into that occupied by Rover. This was a big, good-looking five-year-old horse who had won the Irish Derby two years before, and was a thoroughly game and reliable performer. In shape and colour he was a good deal like Launcelot, save for the remarkable foreleg above mentioned, which was perfectly white from shoulder to fetlock.

Con undid one of his parcels, and produced a paint-pot and brush. Then, intermingling his work with many a 'Woa, boy!' and 'Steady, lad!' he proceeded to bestow upon the white leg a thick coating of brown paint.

'By Jove!' 'Holy Moses!'

These cries came from two of the onlookers. Corbett was silent, but he smiled—a very satisfied smile. He had known what was coming. When Con had administered the final touch, he surveyed his work with supreme complacency.

'Now, gentlemen,' he asked, triumphantly, 'could ye tell wan from the other at two hundred yards?'



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There was a unanimous negative.

'No,' repeated Con, 'an' Roddy Mac, with all his spy-glasses, couldn't, from where he'll have to hide himself.'

'Con,' said Blake, in a tone of profound conviction, 'you're a genius.'

'Wait a bit, Captain,' was the reply, 'I haven't done yet.'

So saying he undid the second parcel, which also contained a pot of paint and a brush.

'What the deuce is he up to now?' muttered Blake.

Con next made his way into Launcelot's stall.

'If the bhoys come back before I'm finished, sir, don't let them in.'

'All right,' said Corbett.

In a few moments Con had painted the colt's near foreleg *white*, in exact imitation of Rover's normal appearance.

'Now, what d'ye think?' he exclaimed, when he had finished, his countenance fairly beaming with delight

'Well, I'm d—d!' ejaculated O'Grady

Blake was speechless with admiration. Presently the ludicrousness of the proceeding struck them, and the three gentlemen burst into fits of laughter, while Con stood with paint-pot in one hand and brush in the other, receiving with modest dignity this just tribute to his abilities.

'Here come the lads,' said Corbett.

'Whisht, gentlemen,' whispered Con, 'not a wurrd till we hear what they say. Now, Tom,' he called, to the boy, 'get the colt out; I'll take Rover.'

The horses were led out, and Con called to Lane, 'Just take hould a minnit, will ye?'

The jockey, who had ridden Rover many times, and knew him well, took the horse by the head mechanically, but presently began to stare with all his eyes. From Rover he turned his gaze upon Launcelot, and an expression of complete bewilderment overspread his countenance. The lad in charge of the colt seemed equally flabbergasted. He, too, looked from one horse to the other as if seeking for something, and at last muttered, in an awe-stricken tone, 'Be jabers, they've swopped legs!'

The laughter, which had with difficulty been restrained up to now, could no longer be suppressed, and Blake, Corbett, and O'Grady, clung to each other in perfect convulsions, while Con leant against the stable door, and, as he himself expressed it, 'laughed fit to kill himself.'

As soon as he could find words, he said,—

‘That’s it, avick; the ould horse knew he was too good for the young one, so he’s lint him his best leg to even things a bit.’

When the mirth had subsided a word of explanation let Lane and Tom into the secret, at which they could not sufficiently express their wonder and delight.

The lads were then carefully weighed, and Corbett having spent a few moments privately adjusting weights in the saddles, he saddled both horses himself, and the party at once set off for the trial ground. This consisted of a strip of old grass land lying along a small stream for a distance of nearly two miles. The posts and rails dividing the fields had been removed in places, leaving gaps of about twenty yards in width, thus forming a nearly straight and quite level run of about a mile and a half, or a little more than the length of the Liverpool Cup course. The turf was short and springy, and afforded splendid galloping. Arrived here, Corbett gave the riders their instructions.

‘Tom,’ he said, ‘you must come away at your best pace, and never let Rover get up to you. If he draws level you must do your utmost to get away again. Pull up when you pass me—I shall be the winning-post.’

Lane’s orders were to wait on Launcelot till the last gap—about a quarter of a mile from the finish—was passed, and then beat him if he could. Con was sent with them to act as starter, the starting-place being at the further end of the ground.

When they had left, Blake asked, ‘What weights are you trying them at, Jim?’

‘Well,’ answered Corbett, ‘I’m setting the young one rather a big task. I don’t think he can quite do it, but if he makes anything like a race I shall be satisfied. He is trying to beat Rover at ten pounds.’

‘By Jove! you don’t think he can do that, do you?’

‘We shall see,’ was the oracular response.

‘By the way, I wonder where our friend the tout is?’ said Blake. ‘I suppose he’s hanging about somewhere?’

‘You may bet your boots that he’s not taken his eye off us since we left the house,’ replied Corbett; ‘trust Roddy Mac for that. However, you see that rising ground about half a mile off? The road passes over the top of it, and he’ll most likely be

somewhere there. He can't come nearer without trespassing, and he's too 'cute for that.'

'After a few minutes of silent expectation, Corbett, who was looking through a field-glass, exclaimed, 'They're coming!'

The horses were still more than a mile off, and the naked eye could barely discern two small objects, apparently moving at a snail's pace. In another minute, however, they could be seen plainly.

'They're keeping well together,' said Corbett, who had never removed his eyes from the glass—'Launcelot's leading. Now they've passed the last gap! Rover's coming up to him! They're level—now for it! By Jupiter! the young one's drawing away! He's leaving him at every stride! Hurrah!' he shouted, as Launcelot dashed past, a good ten lengths in front of Rover, 'the Liverpool Cup's all over!'

Next to actually winning a big race there is nothing more delightful than to find one's horse successful in a good trial. It is the proof that the unremitting care and attention bestowed upon him by his trainer have borne their due fruit, and that, in stable phrase, he is 'as fit as hands can make him.' In easily beating a good and reliable horse like Rover, at a difference of only ten pounds in weight allowed for the two years' disparity of age, Launcelot had accomplished a really splendid performance, and his chance of winning the Liverpool Cup under the light weight allotted him by the handicapper, 6 st. 12 lbs., was a very great one. No wonder, then, that owner and trainer were jubilant as they returned to O'Grady's that morning. In their case, too, they had the additional satisfaction of having, as they believed, completely outwitted the tout who had tried so hard to pry into their secrets. Owing to Con's clever stratagem, Roddy Mac would doubtless be under the impression that Rover had easily beaten Launcelot, and would inform his employers, the bookmakers, to that effect.

'But,' said Corbett, 'the boot is just upon the other leg.'

'Yes,' said Blake, with a laugh, 'on the white leg.'

'What price was the colt at last night, Captain!' asked Corbet.

'Sixteen to one.'

'Well, the betting in to-morrow morning's papers will tell us whether Roddy was taken in or not. The bookies will soon pepper Launcelot if they hear that he has got badly beaten in his trial.'

It may be remarked, in passing, that this little episode occurred some years ago, when the Liverpool Cup was a really good betting race, and the current odds against the various horses engaged in it were to be found in the sporting papers weeks before the event came off.

After a hearty breakfast their future action was discussed. It was decided that Corbett should write that day to his commissioner in London, instructing him to back Launcelot very quietly whenever he could get a good offer. There was to be no hurry, but all the 'long shots' were to be appropriated, and, for the present, nothing less than twenty to one was to be accepted. Captain Blake's share of the programme consisted in showing himself in Dublin that evening, to say as little as possible about his horse while there, and to refrain from backing him no matter what price might be offered.

'Our London man,' said Corbett, 'will get plenty on for us, and it would never do for the owner to be seen backing him at present.'

So they bade adieu to their jolly host, Corbett returning to Broomfield Lodge, and Blake to his quarters at Newbridge.

Events turned out exactly as anticipated. The next day's betting showed Launcelot retired to thirty-three to one, offered, and at this price he remained for some days. Within a week he gradually came down to twenties, and as by that time Blake and his trainer had got all their money invested at an average price of twenty-five to one, they put all their friends on to the 'good thing,' and the true story of the trial came out. Roddy Mac behaved like a raving lunatic when he discovered how cleverly he had been duped, and at first threatened to put an end to himself in the canal. Ultimately, however, he was persuaded to adopt the slower but equally effective method of doubling his usual dose of whisky.

Launcelot, starting at five to one, won the Cup just as easily as he had done his trial, and landed for his party the nice little sum of 30,000*l*. Con had somewhere found a 'fiver' to back his pet colt with, and won quite a pile of money for him. But beyond anything that money could afford, was his delight in having, as he phrased it, 'deludhered intoirely' the cleverest tout on the Curragh.

MENSIS ANNI CARISSIMUS.

By 'LEICESTERSHIRE JACK.'



HERE'S ne'er a bard of whom I've heard, as far as I remember,
Who's penned a line in eulogy of that drear month November.
Sighs the exile, 'Oh ! for England, when the smiling April's
there,'

And the fairy meads of summer-time, with fragrance fresh and fair,
Find a host of men who'll tune their lyre and loud the pæan raise
To the blooming bowers and long long hours of June's transcendent
days ;

As when Coleridge swept his magic strings in soft melodious tune,
'Of the 'hidden brook' that music made in 'leafy month of June.'
So the gorgeous hues of Autumn, on his brave emblazoned shield,
Inspiration to the rover in his woodland glades will yield,
While the frosts of bleak December, that the stream and mere enchain,
When the groves are bare, and earth so fair, extends one snow-clad plain
Send the goose quill on its errand, for the hoar-bowed branches rise,
Making wealth of 'frozen music' 'gainst the clear cerulean skies.
Then rude March, to old Dan Chaucer, gave for theme the 'pale
primrose,'

May—the bonny English hawthorn—'tis the fairest flower that blows.
'Oft they chant the praise of Ceres when September fields are clear,
And the minstrels sing, as church bells ring, to hail the glad New Year ;
But Belvoir, Quorn, and Cottesmore boys will still for aye remember,
To mark each year's red-letter day, the *first one in November*.

For 'tis then that long-drawn scarlet files light up the Quorndon lanes,
As they wend their way to Kirby Gate along the fertile plains ;
From Hazledine's bursts forth a 'field' of riders keen and bold,
Well prepared to face 'The Whissendine' or charge the Dalby Wold.
There's no rain can damp the ardour of so mettlesome a throng,
If the fog will let Tom see the 'sterns' you're seldom steering wrong,
When your 'lode star' is the crupper (of his horse) : but pray beware
How you cause the dear old boy to conjugate the verb 'to swear ;'
He'll go through the moods and tenses if you rashly take a prance
Through the beauteous Quorndon 'ladies,' for it's ten to one you'll
chance

To make mincemeat of a Rallywood or one of Bertram's strain,
Which is warrant for a saint to use vernacular profane,
If that saint should wear a cheesecutter and wind the jovial horn
That we follow in November o'er the 'great grass grounds' of Quorn.
So with judgment calm your ardour in the 'gentle joyous' chase,
Bearing still in mind the motto that foxhunting's not a race ;

Then you'll end a rasping gallop with a stout old varmint's brush,
And you'll vow for all the other months you do not care a rush,
But own the 'boys' of Leicestershire are right to say, 'Remember
To mark each year's red-letter day, the first one of November.'


Though the winds have waged a ruthless war and left the branches bare,
'Tis the month of good St. Hubert, and there's joyaunce in the air,
For whene'er his silver bugle on the classic confines sounds,
The main question ev'ry morning is, the 'fixture' of the hounds ;
And we love to see the dark-brown woods stretch right athwart the sky,
With their plumps of pines like serried spears where'er the range runs
high.

Here and there a patch of turnips green relieves the fallows dun ;
Yea, Dame Nature's aye as winsome 'neath the dim November sun
As when fervid July pours on earth its burning noontide rays,
Or the 'primrose rathe' from hedge-row peeps in smiling April days,
If you count the joys sweet Dian gives this favoured month to crown ;
And you're not a fickle lover who from Nature sobered down,
Turns away like bridegroom weary of his erst bewitching bride,
You'll admit that as you're trotting to a 'holding' covert side,
Or grip hands with dear old friends, you've lost the last six months or
more,

While their keels careered o'er wavelets blue by many a southern shore,
Or their rods they plied on Dee's fair tide or Norway's waters clear,
That you'd part with any other month throughout the live-long year ;
And we are right in Leicestershire to say, 'My boys, remember
To mark each year's red-letter day, the first one of November.'

'A DAY OFF' IN CAMP.—FROG-FISHING.

By J. HARRINGTON KEENE.

AY! jest you boys let up fishin' ter day, whilst I snell
some hooks, and make some leaders, an' splice Bill's
pole, and put er new handle on Dick's reel, an' get
the kinks an' snarls out 'er that cutty hunk-line, an'
chuck together some more flies, and—— Got darn your shins!

There is no saying how long this enumeration would have
gone on had not a boot struck the speaker full on the back of
the neck, evoking the sudden exclamation I have set down, thus
rounding it off, so to speak. This same boot, it may be added,
was immediately 'fired' back to its projector, to the accompani-
ment of a select assortment of sulphurous expletives, and, whilst

the fumes of this detonation are clearing, it may be as well to explain the situation of the persons concerned.

There were four of us, Bill Dakins, Dick Shattock, Eph Ebor—the guiding spirit of the party—and myself. It was Eph who had been advising a day off, as, though we had been encamped some fourteen days on Turkeyfoot Lake, we had not ceased to fish, and to catch fish, during the whole period. Bass, both large and small-mouthed, sun-fish, and bull-heads had been captured by the bushel each day, until our water-kraal, in which we kept them fenced in alive, required enlarging or depopulating, there being little room left for others. In consequence of all this piscatorial activity, our fairly extensive supply of tackle was becoming low, and Eph, being the guide, and the only one expert in the making of flies, *et hoc genus*, had arisen on this particular morning with the important intention in his mind of supplying the omission. His enumeration of the multiplicity of the tasks before him had been rudely broken into by your obedient servant, who had not yet arisen from his virtuous and fragrant couch of balsam boughs, and was, in fact, desirous of further somnolency. Even when camping I never had much desire to pick up that proverbial early worm. 'Early worm,' as Eph remarked, 'guess the cuss 'ed bin out all night ter a picnic, and was jest a squirmin' home.' Howbeit, the return of the projectile boot, with its accompanying objurgations, effectually aroused the others as well as myself, and we were soon out and busy about breakfast.

This substantial meal dispatched, it was decided not to fish, but leave all our tackle to be overhauled and set to rights by Eph. He was soon deep in the absorbing task before him. 'Ephraim,' quoted Dick Shattock, who had been in earlier life accused of a desire to be a 'Methody' minister, 'Ephraim is joined unto idols; let him alone.' This we soon found to be good advice, and held a council of war as to the best way of killing time. My two friends were gay spirits, and could not be kept in a state of even 'masterly inactivity' long without chafing. 'If we couldn't fish, why not go hunting?' But then, it was argued, 'It's the close season for central Ohio, and the woods have little else but song and plumage birds.' I am glad to say that we were no pot-hunters, and these considerations were sufficient to deter us. Still, the morning was a grandly beautiful one, and the dancing water flashed and glittered as the soft wind swept over it, and we knew that it was a good fishing day, and

loudly said so. Eph was, however, firm 'Yer wants yer tackle put to rights! du yer, er don't yer?'

'Why, yes.'

'Well, then, nary a fish-pole is going out er this yer camp till it's done slap up. Tell yer what yer can do, yer catawaulin' niggers; cut yerselves some poles out er ther bresh, and go an' ketch bull-frogs, and be darned to yer!'

Eureka! Here was a new sensation. I had seen the performance of angling for the sapient, broad-boned, bright-eyed, long-tongued, and sonorous-voiced bull-frog, and verily I had eaten, in blissful ignorance till afterwards, his delicate-flavoured hind legs fried with wafer-strips of home-cured ham, and knew the acquisition the batrachian is to the slightly monotonous fare of the backwoodsman, but I had never actually fished for him myself. My companions, however, had, and set about preparing the necessary tackle with alacrity.

Three slender wands of birch were first cut and 'whittled' clean of branches—your average Yankee is a good whittler of sticks at all times and places. They were about fourteen feet long, and comparatively stiff. To the tips of each of these a stout piece of line about four feet was attached, and to this a piece of red flannel, tied round a fish-hook in such a way as to allow it freedom to penetrate, but to hide it from observation. This completed our outfit, and, taking with us the little pea-rifle, we manned the boat, and, taking the sculls myself, we were soon cautiously and quietly coasting round the bush-edges of the lake seeking for the ubiquitous bull-frog.

One word as to this reptile's personality. He is in appearance—so far as shape is concerned, that is—not unlike others of his family, but his mature size is probably seven or eight times that of the ordinary English yellow frog, and his voice, with its loud, resonant, vibrating ch-rung! proportionately louder. Indeed, at night in camp half a dozen of them, within a few yards of your tent, are quite enough, with their deafening chorus, to keep off the visits of the drowsy god indefinitely. What is it the author of the *Comic Angler* says?—

'Here multitudinous legions throng

With guttural notes, continuous, harsh,

It is the bull-frog's choral song,

That, bellowing, shakes the sounding marsh.

Now don't, kind reader, say, 'Oh, pshaw!'

Bull-frogs grow large in Saginaw.

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'In midnight the great city sleeps,
Earth's weary pilgrims rest from care,
The stars watch from their azure deeps,
There's silence in the summer air.
Lie still, lie still, and list with awe,
List to the frogs of Saginaw.'

Well, so it is here; but this is at night specially. In the daytime 'froggy' sits on a log, like that frog made immortal by Mrs. Leo Hunter, or on a patch of weed, and, with his two gold-rimmed eyes staring and blinking at you, waits for your approach till you are about three yards from him. No nearer may you approach. If you do, he dives at once, and, being a swift and powerful swimmer, is out of danger in a moment.

But to return to our fishing. We very soon sighted a large frog, sitting with great gravity, as described, and I manipulated the boat carefully, and with the least possible disturbance of the water, towards him. Dakins carefully pushed the point of his rod forward over the frog's head, till the bait of red flannel hung to within about a foot of froggy's nose. We watched with close interest. The frog at first did not see it, evidently. His large, lustrous eyes were apparently fixed on the boat and its occupants, but as they were still, and the boat did not appear very actively engaged by itself, we suddenly saw the jewel-like orbs flash as they turned towards the dangling red bait, which was still some distance above the creature's head. Like a tiger the frog sprang at it, and, with its long tongue, whilst still in air, drew the swaying scrap of flannel into its cavernous mouth. Of course, as it felt it hooked itself on the concealed hook, and was incontinently hauled into the boat to have the hook extracted and be deposited in one of our largest boat-cans with some damp water-moss till we returned to camp. And then the sport went on. The frogs would come again and again to the bait if they missed it once, and one little fellow, who had been unhooked and thrown back as too little for our purpose, came twice to the same bait, and got hooked twice more before he concluded to depart from that particular locality. These frogs really seemed to be maddened to the height of voracity by the bright colour. Query: Is there any connexion between this fact and their name? We all know the effect of a red flag on a bull.

To vary the proceedings, we agreed that shooting them, as they sat with half an inch or so of head showing for a target,

would be very pretty sport, especially if we betted a little—just a little!—for gambling in Camp Ondawa was an agreed-on rarity, and only permissible under extraordinary circumstances.

'See that coon to the right,' said Dick Shattock, pointing to a frog about ten yards off. 'An even quarter you don't hit it.' This to me, who had the rifle in hand at the moment.

'Done!' I replied, and raised the rifle to fire. Just as I drew a bead on the 'critter,' I saw him wink his eyes, deliberately and solemnly, just like an owl. So did the others; and we all burst into a loud roar of laughter as I lowered the piece. Again I raised it, and, still expecting to see the frog wink, I pulled the trigger. 'Missed!' they shouted; and, true enough, there still sat the frog, seemingly not at all alarmed, and again deliberately winking as who would say, 'Fire away; I'm in no danger.' I fired again, and this time bored a hole through the massive head. It cost me just three dollars fifty-five cents that morning over frog-shooting.

On our return we found Eph had completed his task, and was awaiting our spoils for the frying-pan. We had thirty-five, including one monster quite eight inches in length, and they proved a delicious treat after our diet of fish and ham, mush and hot-cakes; and here, let me say, I would much sooner have them than chicken, both for succulence and delicacy.

Of course Eph had a yarn to tell *à propos* of the frog-fishing. It came about in this way after dinner, and we were smoking our corn cob pipes before the tent in the shade of the maples. I remember I said,—

'What a curious thing they "go for" the red flannel so voraciously! Would they swallow it, I wonder?'

'Swaller?' interrupted Eph, with supreme disdain in his voice and look; 'yer can bet yer sweet life on that, sir-ee. Why, we were up in Saginaw one time, and ole Bill Spicer—yer knowd him, Deacon!' (he always called Shattock 'Deacon,' much to my friend's annoyance)—'well, Bill he had got to roost one night, and was fast asleep, with a' old red flannin' nightcap he always wore on his head, and the torsel a bobbin' and a bobbin' in the wind as he laid jest off the ground in his hammock. I set ther', a smokin' and a thinkin' by ther side o' ther fire, and a calculatin' to turn inter my hammock putty soon, when all of a suddent I misses Bill's red flannin'

cap, and, as I looked agin, I seed ther alfiredest great bull-frog hoppin' orf with it in his mouth. I makes a dive for him, but sure enuf he got away, for it was sorter dark in among the trees and bresh. Well, next mornin' Bill and me hunts for that cap high and low, 'lowin' as thet the frog hed dropped it somewheres. But it was no go. Still we hunts on, and bimeby I stepped on sumphin' that went a squelch under my foot, and, sure enuf, as I'm a' or'nery misserable sinner, I'd a busted that frog, and out come along wi' his six-an'-thirties a part o' thet flannin' cap. Yes, sir-rec, he'd a swallowed the whole bilin'—torsel, cap, b'ar-grease, and two fish-hooks as stuck round ther creases, and was jest asleepin' orf his debauch w'en I unfort'nitly brought my hoof down on his slumbering figger. Thet's a true story for yer to put in yer travels, captain,' said Eph, in conclusion, addressing himself pointedly to me; and so I here record it.

CHOPPED IN COVERT.

By GEORGE F. UNDERHILL.

Author of *In at the Death*, *A Nasty Cropper*, *The Hand of Vengeance*, &c.)



HEN do you go down to Turfshire, Vauxhall ?'

'To-morrow week, I expect. Must be off now.

Going Jermyn Street way ?'

'Not at present.'

Then Captain Vauxhall left the smoking-room of the Curb and Snaffle Club.

The Captain was a mystery. Nobody quite knew how he lived, and, so long as nobody had to pay for his living, nobody cared. He was always well dressed, was to be met at the best houses, and enjoyed more than a fair proportion of sport. Yet his income did not exceed three hundred a year, an income which is hardly sufficient for a man to belong to three West-end clubs, have chambers in Jermyn Street, and hunt three days a week throughout the season. It was whispered that his luck on the turf was marvellous, and that his pigeon shooting varied with the amount of the stakes; that his knowledge of horseflesh was so good as to prove dangerous to his friends, and that he had been well advised to send in his papers when he did. Still, the breath of scandal had never been wafted into a gale to destroy

his social status. Young men might be warned against choosing him for an intimate companion, but nobody had dared to give him the cut direct. Such was the reputation of Captain Vauxhall; what his true character was will appear in the course of this story.

On arriving at his rooms he found a visitor lounging in an armchair smoking a cigar, with a brandy and soda on the table by his side. A shade of annoyance passed over the Captain's face for a moment, but he returned the other's careless nod, and, helping himself from the spirit decanter, waited for his guest to open the conversation.

'Have you decided on your plans?'

'Of course. You know as well as I do that I had no alternative. I was only waiting till the date of the visit was fixed.'

'And suppose you lose?'

'Don't be a fool, Kemp. I must win. If I don't——'

'Yes?'

'I must transfer myself and my wits to the South of Europe.'

'Bad as that, eh?'

The Captain nodded assent.

'Then for both our sakes it is necessary that you should win either by fair means or foul. How do you stand with the girl?'

'As well as anybody else, I believe. I can't say more.'

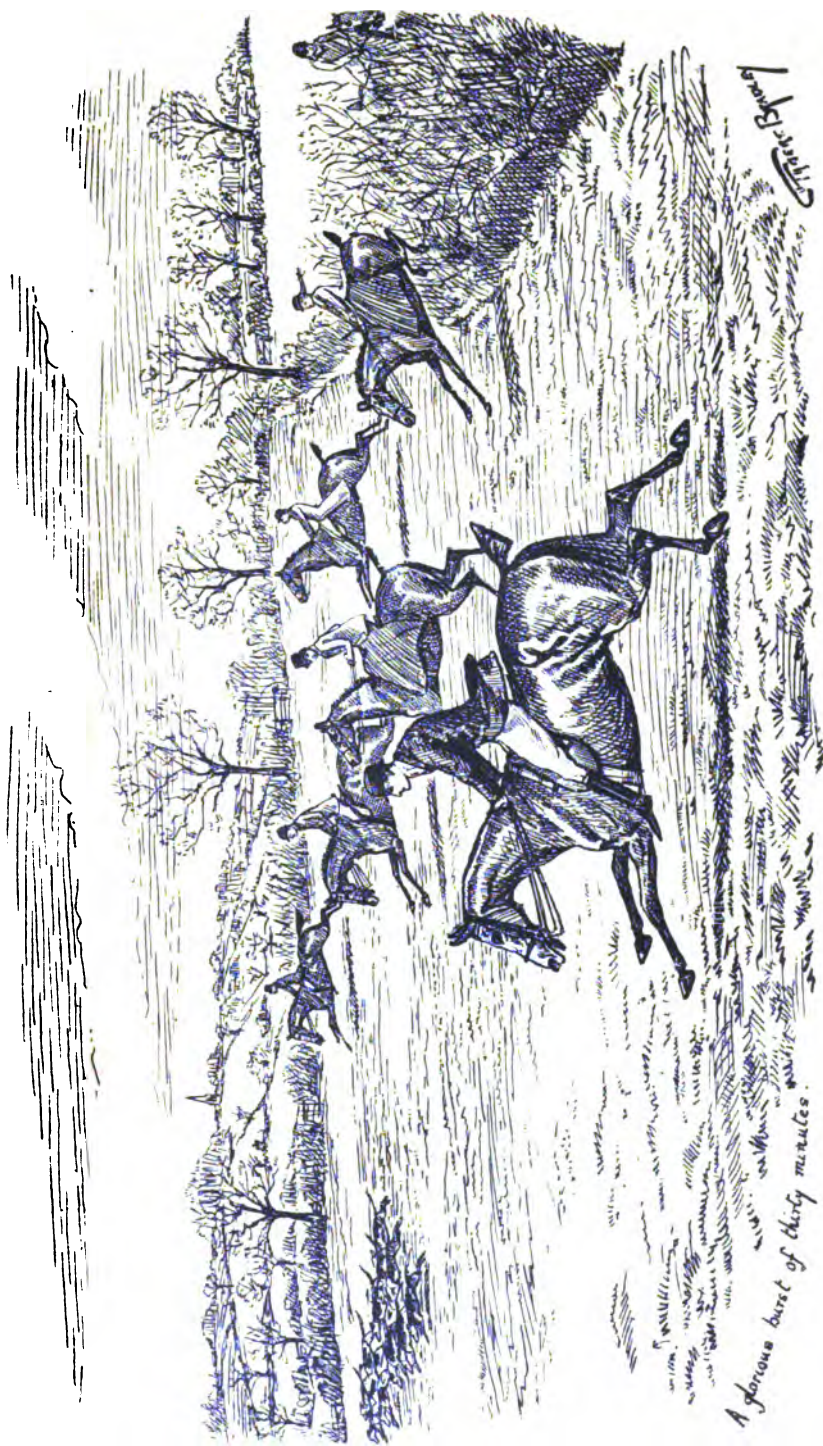
'Nor much less either. I am afraid, Vauxhall, you will find these matrimonial stakes about the hardest race to win in which you have ever ridden. Miss Dolby is not a girl fresh from the school-room. She knows the ropes which divide flirtation from love as well as you do, and will be much more difficult to manage than that genial, bibulous old squire, her father.'

'Complimentary to my prospective father-in-law.'

'Here's to his holding that position,' replied Kemp, not the least abashed, but rather amused by the sneer. 'Now I have a piece of news for you. I shall be staying at Dolby Hall most of the time while you are there.'

'What the deuce do you mean?'

'That your prospective father-in-law has invited me, and that I have accepted the invitation. It won't be the first time that we have hunted in couples, and I think past results prove that you had better accept my help again.'



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‘Show me your hand, man. Your help is not generally gratuitous, so what do you mean to gain this time?’

‘A rich friend with a large country house, and plenty of hunting and shooting. You see I am perfectly candid. By the bye, we shall have as a fellow guest, Hugh Somerville. Do you want my help?’

‘It’s a bargain.’

‘I shall have the pulling of the strings in a very pretty little game, Julian Kemp thought to himself, as he walked home to dress for dinner. Like Vauxhall, he was a social adventurer, but he had not Vauxhall’s advantages of good birth and an army rank. He was a good rider, a good shot, and a good *raconteur* of after-dinner stories, three qualifications which made him an acceptable guest in a sporting country house. It need only be added that he was utterly unscrupulous as to the means he used to attain his own ends.

A week after the conversation related above, these two rooks of society were being whirled down by express train to Turfshire with the laudable intention of securing that wealthy pigeon, Miss Dolby, the only child of Squire Dolby, of Dolby Hall. But, having described the rooks, let us take a glimpse at the pigeon in her nest.

Effie Dolby’s education had been of a somewhat peculiar kind. Her mother had died when she was a baby, and Effie had been brought up by her maiden aunt, Miss Dolby, who kept house for her brother. Sport had always been the Squire’s god, and after his wife’s death he took but little interest in anything else. That the daughter should follow in the father’s footsteps was but natural, and at the age of nineteen she could ride to hounds as well as any woman in Turfshire. But the admiration she excited was not confined to the hunting field. As a child she had been the pet of the men who came to hunt or shoot at Dolby Hall, as a woman she was their queen. She accepted their homage with a graceful dignity as if it were her right, but nobody appeared to have touched her heart. Suitors she could have had many, but she never gave any the slightest encouragement. London men had pronounced the pretty heiress cold when they had met her during her first and only season, but if they had seen her eyes sparkle and the colour come to her cheeks as she got a good start in a quick burst from the Dolby woods they would have owned that they were wrong. In reality she was a thorough English country girl, who regarded neither

flirtation nor marriage as the main object in life. As Julian Kemp had foretold, she would not be an easy girl for Vauxhall to win.

The house party at Dolby Hall was by no means a large one. Beyond the Squire, his maiden sister, and Effie, Kemp and Vauxhall only found Miss Lemaire, a girl friend of Effie's, an American widow, by name Mrs. Despard, and Hugh Somerville. The latter Vauxhall had already recognised as a dangerous rival, and hated him accordingly, a fact of which Somerville was blissfully ignorant.

To a host or hostess the first dinner at a house party must be an anxious ordeal. The momentous question of whether one has got the right people to meet the right people is always asserting itself. But at Dolby Hall there was one subject which everybody had in common, namely, hunting, so before the *entrées* appeared the guests seemed to be on good terms with one another. When the first glass of champagne makes the hunting man give tongue he is not easy to stop. What prodigious heights do those stone walls of Galway, those banks of Connemara, and those 'oxers' of Leicestershire assume, over the nuts and port?

'Well, I hope we shall be lucky to-morrow,' said the Squire. 'Hounds meet at Hampton Spinney, one of the surest finds in Turfshire.'

Kemp had been the most silent one at the table during dinner. Indeed, he generally reserved his conversation till after the ladies had retired, but he had summed up the characters of those present with a degree of accuracy which would have done honour to a private detective. The only person who bothered him was Mrs. Despard, the American widow. He could not help thinking he had seen her before, but when, where, and under what circumstances, he could not recollect. Moreover, he fancied that she recognized him. Who was that pretty, vivacious little brunette, he kept asking himself?

The Squire was given to sitting long over his wine, so it was late when the gentlemen entered the drawing-room. Kemp immediately went up to Mrs. Despard.

'Are you hunting to-morrow?'

For a moment she looked at him with a keen glance of enquiry; then she answered, 'Yes, of course. Everybody hunts here.'

'I suppose one would feel rather like a fish out of water, if

one didn't. Mr. Somerville is a very good man to hounds, is he not?'

'I don't know. He only came yesterday. Here's Mr. Dolby coming to drag us off to Pool, so you male kind can smoke without being deprived of our company. What are you staring at?'

Kemp had caught sight at the moment of a peculiar bracelet which the little American was wearing, which had made him start back suddenly in amazement. He recovered himself in an instant.

'Shall I pilot you to-morrow?' was all he said.

'If you can do it safely. Give me a hint as to the country before breakfast in the shrubbery.'

'What time?'

'Eight, punctually.'

A quarter of an hour before the time appointed for the rendezvous, Julian Kemp was quietly smoking a cigarette in the shrubbery. Whatever thought he might have bestowed on the meeting during the night he now looked as unconcerned as if he were merely out for an ordinary morning stroll, and even when he saw Mrs. Despard approaching, he raised his hat in such a nonchalant manner as if the sight of her was an accident. She held out her hand to him.

'Peace, or war?' she asked.

Kemp shrugged his shoulders. 'Peace, of course. What is the good of our fighting? But what the deuce are you doing down here, and who is Mrs. Despard, the American widow?'

'Mrs. Despard is Jessie Diggins, daughter of Thomas Diggins, horse breaker and horse dealer, the amiable (some say beautiful) relict of Jonathan Despard, of New York. She is down here for the purpose of hunting and enjoying country life. And what is Mr. Julian Kemp here for?'

'For the same reason, I suppose,' he replied, as he lit another cigarette.

'What is the good of our fencing with one another?' she said impatiently. 'Why shouldn't we act together? Tell me your scheme, and I'll be equally frank with you.'

'I have no scheme on my own account to impart. My friend, Captain Vauxhall, has fallen in love with Miss Dolby, and if I can assist him in any way I shall. At present I don't quite see what assistance I can give him.'

'Don't you think you are rather wasting your time?'

'What do you mean?'

'Suppose Mr. Dolby was to marry again?'

'And the relict of Jonathan Despard become mistress of Dolby Hall. I confess the idea never struck me. Now that it does, I presume I should win the gratitude of Vauxhall just the same, and have free quarters at Dolby Hall, and a welcome from the charming mistress. Yes! I'll help you. Now we must go and get into hunting costume.'

'Ballet girls have been duchesses before now, so there is no reason why a horse breaker's daughter should not marry a squire,' mused Kemp, as he watched Mrs. Despard's retreating figure. 'It seems to be my duty to fulfil the rôle of a modern Cupid, and make both father and daughter fall in love. I wish I knew the modern substitute for Cupid's arrows.'

Hampton Spinney was only five miles from Dolby Hall, so the whole party jogged quietly to the meet, without the aid of wheels or covert hacks. As Vauxhall and Somerville had constituted themselves rival cavaliers to Effie Dolby, and the widow was making the running with the Squire, Kemp had to fall back on the society of Miss Lemaire.

If love be, as is currently reported, woman's whole existence, Miss Lemaire's sojourn in this world must have depended upon her fellow creatures without any exertion on her own part, for while the state of the affections of her friends was a matter of the most vital importance to her, yet she seemed perfectly unaware that she possessed a heart of her own, and since, as we have before hinted, Mr. Kemp was a good judge of character, he soon came to the conclusion that that young lady would be a useful informant though a more than useless confederate.

'A rose between two thorns,' he said, nodding towards Miss Dolby. 'Which thorn is to be the happy one, I wonder.'

'Oh! Do tell me. I didn't know. Is Captain Vauxhall in love with Effie?'

'Can't say for sure, Miss Lemaire, for not having had the disease myself, I don't know the symptoms; but he paid her a good deal of attention during the season in town, and his following her down to the country looks as if he were a bit gone; doesn't it? You seem surprised!'

'I am. I always thought that Mr. Somerville was the favourite in that quarter.'

Kemp had thought so too, but he did not say so; he did say:

'No chance at all, I should think, against Vauxhall. Somerville may be a very good fellow in his way, but, well, not good enough for Miss Dolby. You understand me?'

Miss Lemaire said 'Yes'—an answer which was far from the truth.

But there is a time for hunting and a time for making love, and when the Turfshire hounds were put into Hampton Spinney both men, women, and horses were too much intent on seeing whether the little red rover was at home or not, to let their thoughts dwell on the tender passion. Mark how the veteran hunter pricks up his ears at the sound of the first faint whimper; he is as keen as (often keener than) his rider. Listen! that old hound, Harkaway, would not give tongue in that fashion for nothing. Already the second whip stationed at the corner of the covert has silently raised his cap. There is a burst of music as one after another of the hounds catch the scent they love so well. Then comes the ever-welcome cry 'Gone away!' cigars are flung to the winds, and there follows that struggle for a good place at the start, in which those who are most excited are generally far behind at the death.

Forrad! away! Forrader! Forrader!

Down the centre ride of the spinney the majority of the field go, plunging and floundering in the mud towards the open gate at the bottom, where they get jammed together in a confusion which seems inextricable, amidst cries of 'Ware kicker,' 'Ladies, gentlemen,' 'No hurry, sir' (the latter from a stout old gentleman on a fidgetty cob), and so forth. Better, if possible, under these circumstances to follow the example of Kemp, as he turns quietly off the main ride and pops his horse over the post and rails out of covert into the open.

But even now he can only see the sterns of the hindmost hounds disappearing through the blackthorn at the end of the first field, as he sits down in the saddle with the pleasing sensation that he is in for a good thing. But that blackthorn is no easy obstacle to negotiate. Look at that wiry little whip! His horse seems to rise almost perpendicularly in the air before he bounds over. Several of the field make for a gate at some little distance. Now is the time for the first flight to establish themselves. Whoa! gently! and springing from his hindquarters like a deer with his legs tucked under him, ready to get a second impetus even from a twig, Kemp's mount lands him safely on the other side.

Then what a panorama for the hunting man spreads itself out before him! As far almost as the eye could reach there was nothing but grass, with hardly so much as a bush to hold a fox,

while in the foreground hounds were going at steeplechase pace. Patches of green bounded by the dark lines of the Turfshire 'oxers'; such was the country, and you will require a strong nerve and a good horse to get safely over it, and live with hounds. If you do not possess both you had better stick to the gates, and trust to your luck to see as much of the fun as you can.

Three more fields and already saddles had begun to be emptied. Kemp was now sufficiently forward to be able to take a look round at the field. Vauxhall was within thirty yards of him, but where was Miss Dolby? He could not see her. 'You fool,' he muttered, apostrophising his friend, 'I shouldn't wonder if you've given a trick away already.' The only habit in view was that of Mrs. Despard, who had the squire in attendance. But Kemp was too keen a sportsman to give further heed to the doings of his neighbours, he sailed away in full enjoyment of perhaps the only healthy amusement he ever indulged in. Black care seldom sits behind us in one of the best things of the season, when our favourite horse carries us safely in the first flight, throwing the fences behind him with the spirit that knows not what it is to refuse, and we ourselves feel that the pleasure of a thousand years is being concentrated in one brief half hour.

But leaving Kemp in the van, we must go back and see what has become of Effie Dolby.

Directly hounds had left Hampton Spinney, Vauxhall, forgetting the real object of his visit to Dolby Hall, had left Effie to look after herself, or rather to be looked after by Hugh Somerville, which was exactly what the latter gentleman wished for. Whether Effie noticed this neglect or not is a fact she never deigned to explain, but there was not much doubt that she felt grateful to Somerville when he said—

'I shall ask you to be my pilot to-day, Miss Dolby. The country is absolutely strange to me.'

Unfortunately they got away badly, for Somerville's talking at covert side had taken Effie's attention away from what hounds were doing, so that she did not know exactly where the fox had broken, with the result that they soon found themselves hopelessly in the rear. The girl bit her lip with vexation, but there was nothing to do but to plod on in the hope of a check. Somerville followed her like a faithful dog, and it was just as well that he did, for before ten minutes were over Effie's mare

cast a shoe and began to go lame. There was nothing for it but to go to the nearest blacksmith.

'But don't you bother to come with me, Mr. Somerville. I know the way perfectly well.'

Of course Somerville insisted; in fact, he blessed the accident. The blacksmith's shop was three miles away, and by the time they had got there and a new shoe had been fitted, hounds might, for all they knew, have been on the other side of the county. Still it was too early in the day to give up all hope and go home, so they jogged on in the direction in which they thought they must have gone, Somerville, for one, inwardly trusting that they should not pick them up. Certainly it is very nice to canter along by the side of a pretty girl, occasionally popping over an easy place, although it does cost you the best run of the season.

It has been said, and with a certain amount of truth, that the worst accidents in the hunting field take place at gaps. Their insignificance makes us and our horses careless. At all events, it had that effect with Effie's mare, for, in her disdain at being called upon to go over one, she put her foot in a cart rut on the further side, pecked, tried to recover herself, and then rolled over. Fortunately Effie fell clear, but when Somerville jumped off to her assistance he found her insensible. He raised her head gently and poured some of the contents of his flask down her throat. She slowly opened her eyes and met his ardent look of love.

She was only shaken, and by his help was soon able to stand up, and after a few minutes to remount. But what he said to her, and what she said to him, within those few minutes were amply sufficient to scatter to the winds any chances that Vauxhall might have had of winning Effie's hand. Then they rode slowly back together to Dolby Hall.

All good things in this world must come to an end, and the stoutest fox that ever breathed can't go on for ever; so the cunning gentleman from Hampton Spinney had to be content with having given his pursuers a glorious burst of thirty minutes, and then he gnashed his sharp little teeth, and like the plucky animal he was, died without a cry, though there were only five horsemen and one lady in at his death. The lady was Mrs. Despard, and amongst the men were Kemp and the Squire. Miss Lemaire came up with a few stragglers some minutes afterwards, but Vauxhall was not to be seen. The obsequies

were duly performed, congratulations exchanged, flasks taken out, and those who had second horses began to look anxiously for them.

Neither Kemp nor Miss Lemaire were amongst the latter lucky ones, and as the Squire and Mrs. Despard were, Kemp had to escort Miss Lemaire back to Dolby Hall, for both their horses were done to a turn.

'I wonder where the others can have got to,' thought Kemp. 'Vauxhall is not often far behind at the death, and Miss Dolby is generally there or thereabouts as well.'

They got home soon after three o'clock, when Kemp learned to his surprise that Effie and Somerville had arrived nearly two hours before them. He thereupon muttered an oath such as ladies may not hear, and strolled into the dining-room to regale himself with cold game and beer. After which, as it was still early, he thought he might as well take a stroll and a cigar in the shrubbery, and review in his own mind Mrs. Despard's confidences of the morning. Accordingly, he exchanged his pink and cords for the ordinary tweed suit and went out.

Now, however convenient a shrubbery may be in many respects for the meetings of lovers, it presents one drawback, namely, that a third person may come upon you unawares. This was exactly what happened to Effie and Somerville, who were suddenly seen by Kemp in that comfortable position which is supposed to be the exclusive property of an engaged couple. The observer watched for a moment or two, and then drew back without being himself observed. He entered the house, and going into the smoking-room, threw himself into an arm-chair, and rang the bell for brandy and soda water.

'The first fox chopped in covert,' he soliloquized. 'My good friend Vauxhall, you might at least have afforded me the pleasure of a run. I wonder if the vixen will show better sport?'

The expression was characteristic of the man. He knew the game was lost, so far as Vauxhall was concerned. That gentleman might just as well pack up his portmanteau and go to town in the morning to present his petition in the Bankruptcy Court. Kemp therefore dismissed him from his mind, and began to consider how the new position of affairs would serve his purpose. The result of his thoughts can be briefly told. Effie had been her father's constant companion, he would miss her companionship; now was the chance for Mrs. Despard to supply her place. Then he found himself wondering how Jessie

Diggins, whose vocation in early life had been to show off her father's horses, until that worthy gentleman had found it convenient to leave his native land, had become Mrs. Despard. He had recognised the bracelet as one he had given her some years ago in return for certain information that a strong favourite for the Doncaster Cup would not win, but of what she had been doing since her estimable parent had been warned off the Turf and fled the country he had not the faintest idea.

To prevent his troubling his brains to form an idea, Vauxhall came into the room. His temper was as bad as his coat and breeches were muddy, for he had had a nasty purler, and lamed his horse into the bargain. He had heard also at the stables of Effie's fall, and of her coming home with Somerville, of Kemp's return with the news that they had had a splendid run, and that hounds had tumbled their fox over in the open. The knowledge that he had missed a quick thing, and an opportunity of ingratiating himself with Effie made him as angry with himself as it was in his nature to be.

'Had a spill?' asked Kemp quietly.

The Captain recounted his troubles with the unnecessary addition of much strong language as he drank two wine-glasses of neat brandy.

'What do you think now?' he said in conclusion.

'That if I were you I should get out of those garments as quickly as possible, for, to say the least of them, they are decidedly dirty,' the other coolly replied. He did not intend to take upon himself the unpleasant task of acquainting his friend with what he had seen.

Vauxhall muttered an oath and went up to his room. Kemp had not been alone another five minutes before the door opened, and Mrs. Despard entered.

'Jessie, you are the very person I wanted to see. Now, listen to what I've got to say, for the dressing-bell will go in another quarter of an hour. I promised to help you this morning, and I will, though, of course, on the understanding that I retain the friendship of the future mistress of Dolby Hall.'

She nodded assent, and he then told her his news, and the plan of action he advised her to adopt. When he had finished, she asked him:

'But how am I to explain the past?'

'I should have thought you had already made up your mind about that.'

She paused for a moment.

'Yes; now I've gone so far I'll risk it at all hazards,' and without another word she left the room.

Meanwhile, Somerville had had an interview with the Squire. The old gentleman was extremely loth to lose his daughter, but he was too unselfish to think that he could keep her with him for ever. He said a few affecting words to Somerville, shook his hand fervently, and so entrusted his daughter to him. Still, he felt ill at ease while he was dressing. The idea of being left a solitary widower was far from pleasing. Then his thoughts reverted to the day's hunting, and from that in a natural sequence to Mrs. Despard. Then he reflected that it would be very nice always to hunt with Mrs. Despard, and then he went downstairs to the drawing-room.

It required all Vauxhall's presence of mind to conceal his anger when the Squire in his bluff way announced the engagement before the dinner gong sounded. Still, he managed to offer his congratulations as if it were a matter of little moment to him. He drank more champagne than usual, but nobody but Kemp knew the rage and despair which was burning within him; none but Kemp knew the storm which would burst afterwards.

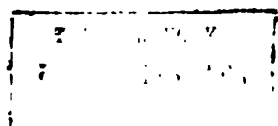
What with the open air and the wine he had taken at dinner, the Squire's face was flushed when he entered the drawing-room. He looked round for Mrs. Despard, but did not at first see her, until he caught a glimpse of her in the little conservatory beyond, where she was lounging in a garden chair beneath the huge palm leaves. He went and sat down beside her, and Kemp noticed her smile of welcome to him. He noticed, too, that when they returned to the room half-an-hour later there was a look of exultation on her face, and he knew that she had won her game, even if she had not shot a quick glance of intelligence at him.

'I look like having a run with the vixen anyhow,' he muttered to himself. 'I don't care how the obsequies of the fox are celebrated.'

It was a heartless thought; but Kemp was a heartless man. He sat up late in his bedroom smoking and thinking before the fire. After all, his visit would be profitable. He had Mrs. Despard in his power. What might not happen? The Squire could not live long. Perhaps he should reign in his place some day. Hush! what was that? Was it the rain outside? The



The obsequies were daily performed



night was dark and stormy. He got up from his chair and listened. There was the same noise again. He put out his candles and gently opened the door.

Bang! Bang!

In an instant the house was in an uproar. Lights were seen flitting about, and loud voices were heard. Kemp took up his revolver, saw that it was loaded, and went out to see what was the matter. There was a crowd in the hall, gathered round two men, who had evidently been taken red-handed in the act designated by the law as burglary, further aggravated by the use of firearms. Leaning over the bannisters, with her eyes straining themselves out of their sockets, was Mrs. Despard.

'What is the matter, Jess?' he asked in an undertone.

She turned round and caught him by the arm. She was as pale as death.

'Look! Don't you see? The one is my father, and the other is my—husband,' and she swooned in his arms.

So the vixen was chopped in covert.

MELTONIANA.

By TOM MARKLAND.



AFTER I had finished gossiping about Joe Chamberlain, and his mare Kathleen, it occurred to me that he had an interesting namesake, who acted as gamekeeper to Sir John Hartopp.

With the single exception of John Large, we never had a more amusing 'velveteens' in Leicestershire. But his stories differed from John's, the latter being of the Munchausen order, Chamberlain's mostly quaintly humorous stories of poaching dodges, and his own counter moves, showing keenness of observation, as regards the habits of man and beast as far as they fell under his observation.

He had a special antipathy to one Harry Towers—an antipathy tinged with a good deal of respect, if not admiration, for Harry's abilities were considerably in excess of his principles. The latter, indeed, mainly consisted of a profound sense of the obligation to best a keeper on each and every opportunity that presented itself. The fortune of war between Towers and Cham-



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er. There was a crowd in the street, it was Thursday
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So the vixen was charged with the men must look after

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replied Will, after a moment or two. 'He's
sure as a gun, and I don't believe he took the
for any other purpose. Depend upon it, h
the field one morning, and another the next, an

berlain declared itself now on one side, then on another, as time wore on. For a long time the keeper failed to secure his enemy's conviction, though he several times succeeded in confiscating his gear, which was, of course, expensive to replace, though Harry was a capital hand at netting (I mean making nets). After one of these seizures, Chamberlain and Towers were sitting hob-a-nob at Munton's 'public' (Harry used to boast that he was the only poacher Chamberlain would drink with: but, 'bless you,' Harry would remark, with a grin, 'he never keeps me long without a drink, when he knows I'm hard up')—it was a queer situation: the keeper's keen eyes steadily fixed on the face of the other, which was only occasionally raised from the work with which he was occupied. And what do you think that work was? The new net to replace the one his boon companion had captured!

'Harry,' remarked the keeper, 'you would do well if you worked as hard at other things as you do at that darned net.'

'Very likely,' replied the other, 'I thought of getting a bit of work, for I'm so hard up I can't buy the string for the net, and what can a man do without his tools?'

'Well, I know you're handy with tools. Come up and mend all our broken coops: they've gone from year to year, till I must have them patched up, or the birds will stand a bad chance next year.'

'Very well, I will,' said Harry, 'it is a little in my line, when you come to think of it. I don't like to take on just any sort of job, you know.'

'Think you'll be helping to rear 'em, and get a share of 'em after, eh, Harry?'

'That's about it,' replied Harry, with a sly laugh.

When the keeper got home, he told his wife what he had done.

'Whatever made you want that scamp about the place, Will? I should think you ought to be glad to get him out of your sight,' replied the wife.

'Ah, you trust me for knowing my business, Bessie. You see, we've some splendid coveys this year, if I can manage to keep 'em till Sir John comes down; and it was a great slice of luck to catch Towers, and get his net last week. If I keep him at work all day, he can't be making another; and supposing he does nothing, it saves an extra night-man, for that's what I should have to do, if I want any sleep for the next month or six weeks.'

'Well, you may be right; but you and that fellow remind me of Goodall and a fox.'

'How do you mean, Bessie?'

'Well, Goodall would never forgive any body for killing one of the old thieves, though he's the biggest enemy they have in the long run. You can't keep away from Harry Towers above a day or two after you've had a bout. Let me see, it was Thursday night when you were fighting like mad, and now, I suppose, you've been drinking at Munton's.'

'It's all right, Bessie. They're a fine, strong lot of birds, and I shouldn't feel easy a minute, night or day, if I thought that beggar had a net. He's up to so many fresh dodges. Just fancy, the year before last, when he got three coveys in the meadows. I was on the look out sharp enough, and got my glass on the pair, while they were dragging the net; but they were dressed like old women wood gathering. You never know when you *have* made safe of Harry Towers, but I don't see how he can get partridges without a net, and the men must look after the pheasants.'

'This was September, and when Towers turned up according to promise, the birds were strong on the wing, barring second broods, and Chamberlain's heart was glad when one of the coveys rose with a mighty whirr, while, in the distance, he could sometimes hear the tap of Harry Towers' hammer, as he pegged away in leisurely style at the coops. 'Half a crown a day and his beer,' said Chamberlain to himself, 'I never spent money better in my life.'

'The world went very well,' as far as Freeby and the neighbourhood were concerned, for about a fortnight, and Bessie began to think she had been wrong for once, when one fine morning a change came o'er the spirit of her dream. Will came in for dinner, after a walk round, looking as black as thunder. 'What's wrong with you, Will?' enquired Bessie. 'You look as if you were going to your own funeral.'

'Has Towers come yet?'

'No, he hasn't, and he's either on the drink or tired of his job, for he sent a boy up to say he thought the coops were all right now, and he had another job in view.'

'D—— him,' replied Will, after a moment or two. 'He's got my birds as sure as a gun, and I don't believe he took the job on the coops for any other purpose. Depend upon it, he walked across one field one morning, and another the next, and

so on, till he knew where most of the coveys fed, so that he could make a clean sweep of most of 'em. Where he got his net from though is more than I can imagine.'

'He's one too many for you, Will. Keep him at arm's length, as I always told you. But there, it's no use talking, you will go your own way.'

'He hasn't finished that net,' mused Will, 'so he must have bought or borrowed one; but he had no money to spare, I'll warrant, and who could lend him a net?'

Chamberlain pondered much on the matter, but got no nearer, till one day, meeting Towers he took him into the ale-house to pay him the wage for his last day's work, when the poacher showed him a copy of the *Leicester Journal*, and drew his attention to the following paragraph:—

POACHING AFFRAY.—An amusing incident, of which we are informed on the best authority, occurred on Wednesday night, when a gang of poachers, five in number, were unexpectedly assailed by half a dozen men close to Barkby Holt. The poachers were so surprised, knowing, as they did, the whereabouts of every keeper on the estate for the time being, that they were somewhat easily overpowered, and one of them, the ringleader, who rejoices in the soubriquet of 'Gentleman George,' was deprived of a net, constructed from the finest twill silk, and capable of being carried in a shooting coat pocket. The curious part of the affair was that none of the keepers nor watchers knew anything about the matter, but our representative has since ascertained that the attacking party were simply brother poachers, and their object the acquisition of the above mentioned net, which was required for use on a certain estate, not a hundred miles from Melton. If our information be reliable, as we think it is, the reformation so suddenly worked in the character of our leading professional poacher was of a very doubtful kind. Rumour asserts that being unable to use an ordinary sized net unobserved, he gained an accurate idea of the locality of several fine coveys, and by removing a few of the bushes, which were not missed, managed to net the ground pretty successfully. Be this so or not, his new spell of industry came to an end the day after the disappearance of the birds alluded to, which was a remarkable coincidence, *if* a coincidence at all.

'I wonder whether you would know that industrious young man, if you were to see him,' remarked Harry, looking as stolid as a block of granite.

'I guess I *shall* know him,' replied Will, bringing his mahogany face close up to Harry's, 'and I'll break every bone in his body, if ever I get a fair chance again.'

'Don't bear malice, Will, you've got to catch your hare first.

Order another quart, and I'll show you the net. Therewith he brought out of his pocket a net fully sixty yards long, strong enough for all practical purposes, which attracted no more attention, when carried in the pocket, than half a dozen rabbit nets.

Netting partridges, however, as both Towers and Chamberlain knew, is the least lucrative source of a poacher's income. As a rule, if fields are well bushed, there is little to fear after the young ones are hatched; but 'egging' is both paying and eminently mischievous on a preserve.

Speaking of this one day, Will Chamberlain remarked, 'The old fools' (meaning the hen partridges) 'mostly lay close by a road, so that they can get out and "flusker" in the dust; so a fellow like Towers, with a good terrier, can go along the road, while his dog finds the nests, and then he can wait till the coast is clear, and have the eggs as easily as shelling peas.'

The terrier in question was useful to Harry in another way, and more than once saved him, by detecting the presence of a watcher in the ditch, when Harry was paying a round of visits to his snares. But he made a good deal of money by the nefarious traffic referred to, which, of course, couldn't go on, if so called sportsmen didn't buy the eggs. Any 'gentleman' caught at it ought to have a round dozen, and I am fain to believe that the chief offenders hail from Belgium and Northern France. What makes it more aggravating, is that these birds that are hatched in a natural way don't pack nearly so much as those reared in the coops, and therefore they afford better sport, especially late in the season, when driving is the order of the day.

Will used to say, 'What with Harry and his tyke on the road, and what with the old 'carrion' crows in the air, a road wanted more watching than any part of the beat; but I believe he missed that troublesome gentleman in more ways than that of feeling relieved when Harry came to an untimely end, between Twyford and John O'Gaunt.

How the thing occurred was never fully known, but he was last seen in company with 'Gentleman George' and several others. It was well known that George had never forgiven the robbery of his net—not that it was on ordinary occasions as effective as a hempen one, but it was a distinction to possess it.

All that could be elicited by the authorities was insufficient to establish the fact of a murder having been committed, still less to bring it home to any one, but the general impression was that a quarrel arose, and in the *mêlée* Harry got one on the

wrong spot, for he was found by the road side dead as a herring, with a wound on the skull behind his left ear, which the doctors said was caused by some blunt instrument.

At his funeral there was a scanty train of mourners, but, standing apart, leaning on his muzzle-loader, was the tall figure of Will Chamberlain, and Will was as sincere in his mourning as any one present on the occasion, though the only sentiment he uttered was, 'Well, he's gone, and I'm glad I didn't strike the blow that settled him, as I easily might have done, for we've had many an up and down in the way of business.'

NOTES ON NOVELTIES.



SPORTSMEN with musical proclivities will welcome a brightly-written hunting song by Clifton Bingham, entitled *Sir Reynard*, the words of which, by special permission, are appended. It 'goes without saying' that the musical setting by Arthur E. Godfrey is cheerful and spirited. The publishers, Robert Cocks & Co., have produced it in their usual (only more so) admirable manner, and it will be recognised that the coloured, sporting title-page is really a work of art.

The mist is on the meadow lands, the rime is on the thorn,
The music of the tally-ho is ringing on the morn ;
'Tis many a trusty hunter and a gallant pack to lead,
Sir Reynard is the boy who'll give us merry sport indeed
Away, o'er valley, hill and dale, to follow fast and free ;
A vet'ran and a steady pack—what sport could better be ?
Hark forward ! for they're giving tongue, 'Old Blazer,' knowing hound,
Is off without a whimper, with his nose upon the ground !

Chorus : Then here's to the master
And here's to the hound,
And here's to the huntsman,
So pass the toast round !
Here's to the brown mare,
And here's to the grey—
And here's to Sir Reynard
Tally-ho ! Gone away !

Ill fares the man who now delays, for Reynard makes the pace,
And every field that's taken shows another empty place ;
Sir Reynard's artful—gives a check—they've lost him ! no they've not !
Who-whoop, they're off, and once again the pace is growing hot

Across the valley, through the brook, and up that bit of hill—
It's devil take the hindmost, if you'd be in at the kill !
Then hey for brave Sir Reynard, for the king of sport is he,
His brush shall hang in banquet hall, for every eye to see !

Chorus: Then here's to the master, &c.

Stray Sport is the name given by Mr. J. Moray Brown to his two interesting volumes of sporting reminiscences, recently published by Messrs. Blackwood. As this well-known writer has strayed as far afield as India, his descriptions and stories of tiger-shooting, pig-sticking, and jungle sport, occupy with advantage the best part of the first volume, while to the remainder are devoted accounts of shooting and fishing experiences nearer home. The numerous illustrations by such artists as G. D. Giles, Cuthbert Bradley, J. C. Dollman, &c., give additional interest to these excellent books.

The safety bicycle, which is abused universally for its appearance and short-comings, and used with equal impartiality for its handiness and speed, has recently been somewhat reformed by the makers of the 'Rover,' J. K. Starley & Co., of Coventry. They have at last realised the dirty nature of cycling when carried out on muddy roads, and have, in order to get away from it, lengthened and heightened the 'Diamond' frame, now so much in demand, thus raising the rider some ten inches from his normal position in the seat of a 'safety.' This advantage should be appreciated during the coming months, especially as less side-slip is claimed for the idea, as well as steadier steering. It is said that in the new pattern an upright position will be natural, but it seems hopeless to expect anything but bent backs from present-day cyclists.

Swimming is the latest addition to the well-known Badminton Library (Longmans, Green, & Co.), and well supports in interest and usefulness the character of the former volumes. Besides dealing with the science of this almost indispensable acquirement in such a manner as to commend itself to the expert as well as to the tyro, a large share of the book is given up to instruction in the art of saving life and the treatment of the apparently drowned, which everyone should make it his duty to study.

Equal in interest to the well-known sporting novels that have already proceeded from the pen of Sir Randal H. Roberts, Bart.,

is his last one entitled, *Not in the Betting*. Hunting and love-making, battles and wounds, racing and steeplechasing, with their too frequent concomitants of roguery, usury and regrets, winding up with the expected satisfactory *denouement*, the whole worked out and written in a way peculiarly his own, will make this volume a pleasant fireside companion in the coming months. F. V. White & Co. are the publishers.

John Head & Sons of Ebury Street, Pimlico, have recently patented a *Saddle Bar for Ladies' Saddles*, which they claim to possess advantages over many already in use, amongst which are the following : viz., there are no springs to get out of order ; the stirrup leather cannot be accidentally detached, but immediately, and without fail, releases itself in the event of a fall ; and further, the flatness of its arrangement offers no friction to the leg of the rider.

Sporting Notes in the Levant, by Lieut. Dayrell Davies, R.N., F.Z.S., F.R.G.S. (Gale & Polden, Amen Corner, Paternoster Row) is the title given to a most enjoyable little volume, descriptive of sport engaged in by the author during a three years' cruise in the Levant. A most enthusiastic sportsman and naturalist, Lieut. Davies fairly makes the reader accompany him in the spirit in the various shooting expeditions he so vividly describes. The 'man with the gun,' more especially one likely at any time to visit the Levant in quest of sport, must indeed be hard to please if he fails to find both amusement and instruction in these graphically written notes.

Highland sport is ever attractive, and (thanks to the speed and comfort which present-day locomotion affords) is pursued by constantly increasing numbers year by year. To this multitude of sportsmen the volume by James Conway, entitled *Forays among Salmon and Deer*, will be very welcome. As they turn the pages and follow the author, at times with salmon-rod in pursuit of the 'lordly fish,' at others, rifle in hand, stalking 'the monarch of the glen,' they will fancy again a whiff from the 'land of the heather.' Crisply written, with amusing anecdotes, there is not a dull chapter in the book. Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co. are the publishers.

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From the Original Drawings by JOHN BEER:—

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Plate 1.—THE PRELIMINARY. | Plate 3.—THE WATER JUMP.
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RACING.

Plate 1.—EPSOM: THE PADDOCK.
„ 2.—SANDOWN: THE PRELIMINARY CANTER.
„ 3.—DONCASTER: AT THE POST.
„ 4.—ASCOT: THE START.
„ 5.—NEWMARKET: THE RACE.
„ 6.—GOODWOOD: THE FINISH.

Size, 30 × 14½ inches. Price 9*l.* 9*s.* the Set of Six.

‘Brimful of originality, daring in conception, bold and crisp in treatment, rich in colour, correct in drawing, and abounding with character and “go,” are the Six Racing Scenes by John Beer. Forsaking the beaten path of the ordinary painter of racing subjects, with his conventional attitudes of horses, and stilted, mannered seats of jockeys, the artist in this series has struck out a line peculiarly his own, with a success begotten of much study pursued at the metropolis of the turf.’—*Sporting Notes*.

‘Views of Epsom, Sandown, Ascot, Doncaster, Newmarket, and Goodwood, and of the out-lying scenery, give in each case a quality of picturesqueness heretofore but seldom found in works of this character. The plates are brilliantly coloured, and that the general treatment of the respective subjects is distinctly “unconventional” will be readily admitted.’—*Morning Post*.

‘The equine drawing is life-like and full of action.’—*Daily Telegraph*.

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ORMONDE, by Bend Or—*Lily Agnes*. Winner of the 2000 Guineas,
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FORES'S
NEW SPORTING PUBLICATIONS.

→* RACING *←

From the original paintings by A. C. HAVELL.

PLATE I.

EPSOM.—INSPECTING THE COMPETITORS.

PLATE II.

SANDOWN.—PREPARING TO START.

PLATE III.

KEMPTON.—THE PARADE.

PLATE IV.

NEWMARKET.—WAITING for the VERDICT.

Size of each Plate, 23 × 14 inches. Price 4/. 4s. the Set of Four.

'Exceedingly cheerful and full of racing character is the new series of four coloured prints, representing the different phases of the "Sport of Kings," recently issued by Messrs. Fores, Piccadilly. They are from the pencil of Mr. A. C. Havell, and fully maintain his well-earned reputation as a spirited delineator of sporting subjects. Plate I represents an assemblage of ladies and gentlemen in the paddock at Epsom, "Inspecting the Competitors," the central figure being Ormonde, with Archer up. The scene is gay, bright, and as full of sunshine as was the last Derby Day. The next plate transports the spectator to Sandown, where the horses are "Preparing to Start," the most prominent being Ayrshire, with F. Barrett up. Plate 3 shows the Grand Stand at Kempton, and "The Parade" for the Jubilee Stakes, with that grand horse Bendigo in the foreground, bestridden by J. Watts. The Birdcage at Newmarket completes the set of four, and here is to be seen Prince Soltykoff's Sheen "Waiting for the Verdict" after having won the Cesarewitch.'

Sporting Notes.

'To the large and miscellaneous collection of sporting pictures issued from this historic establishment in Piccadilly an acceptable addition has been just made in the shape of a series of four prints illustrative of as many characteristic racing incidents on such celebrated courses as Epsom, Sandown, Newmarket, and Kempton. The subjects of these finely-coloured versions of original paintings by Mr. A. C. Havell are respectively entitled "Inspecting the Competitors," "The Parade," "Waiting for the Verdict," and "Preparing to Start."—*Morning Post.*

'Messrs. Fores, of Piccadilly, from whose studios have issued so many clever illustrations of English sport, have recently published a set of Turf pictures which will certainly do their reputation no harm. These are chromo-lithographic reproductions of four paintings by Mr. A. C. Havell, the subject in each case being furnished by one of our great racecourses. We see in turn the starting-post at Sandown, the paddock at Epsom, a parade at Kempton, and, finally, a sleek-coated winner at Newmarket, who stands in the centre of an admiring throng while his jockey is being "weighed in." The artist has done his work well in all these pictures, which are made doubly interesting by the portraits of many noted "flyers," including Ormonde, The Bard, Bendigo, Donovan, and Sheen.'—*Daily Telegraph.*

FORES'S SPORTING PUBLICATIONS.

ASCOT.

From the Original by JOHN CHARLTON.

Depicts Racehorses and Jockeys passing the Grand Stand on their way to the starting-post. The popular colours of the Duke of Westminster, Mr. Vyner, and Mr. Barclay are seen in the foreground.

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From the Original by JOHN CHARLTON.

Introduces two competitors cleverly negotiating a fence in pursuit of a third, who has just succeeded in so doing, and is getting again into his stride.

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FORES'S NEW SPORTING PUBLICATIONS.

A FOXHUNTER'S DREAM.

From the Original by A. C. HAVELL.

'Represents a sportsman comfortably ensconced in an easy-chair, with slippers on fender, in front of a fire, sleeping after (presumably) a hard day, followed by a sufficing dinner, and in his perturbed dreaming topsy-turvy incidents of the Chase are supposed to be present to his mind's eye, and are very evident to the natural optics of the beholder, as seen through the parted wreaths of smoke proceeding from the fireplace. Thus in one glimpse we see a desperately distressed sportsman pursued by a pack of foxes, and in another a Foxhound in like evil case—then foxes making it particularly lively for a flying Earthstopper; while, again, scarlet-coated foxes, mounted on foxhounds, are seen going full cry over fences or through water after their human quarry. A Hunt Breakfast is also portrayed, the partakers of which are again foxes in "pink," obsequiously waited upon by fox-terriers. Immediately round and about the weary slumberer are more foxes in Hunting Costume, some jeering and some toasting the passive sportsman, whilst others are playing tricks with his hunting apparel—notably, one astride his Hunting Cap, to which is harnessed a couple of hounds, which he is driving tandem; nor from the feverish vision of the victim is omitted the ballroom, the opera, and other places, where invariably Mr. and Mrs. Fox take the lead; whilst Mephistophelean diablerie is also strongly in evidence.'—*Sporting Notes.*

Coloured Print, 24 × 18½ inches, £2 2s.

A RACING NIGHTMARE.

From the Original by A. C. HAVELL.

'The latest sporting publication which has emanated from the gallery of Messrs. Fores is entitled *A Racing Nightmare*, from the pencil of A. C. Havell, and forms a worthy pendant to his popular *Foxhunter's Dream*, being equally replete with humour of the topsy-turvy character, and, like most dreams, is considerably mixed with the usual amount of incongruity, the whole forming an elaborate and mirth-provoking joke. Commencing at the bottom right-hand corner we see a sleeper in a most uncomfortable position; he is probably a jockey, mayhap a trainer—at any rate, by his surroundings, evidently a racing man, and the cause of his perturbed slumbers may have arisen from having experienced a "bad time" or a good dinner imperfectly digested; but, no matter, the result is decidedly amusing—at least, to the spectator, who may enjoy, according to his power of humorous appreciation, the pictorial effects portrayed. Upon the slumberer, with fore feet planted on his chest, and gazing at him with flashing eyes, is a black horse or (more likely) mare, while around his couch proceed such fantastic incidents as a jockey riding on his towel-horse, steeplechasing over and into his ready-filled tub, pony racing with monkeys up, and an imp ringing a saddling-bell attached to the head-rail of his bed; above these are to be seen ghostly riders on a moor, with frightened touts making off with all haste; then right across the picture is represented a gigantic race, in which are depicted some of the principal owners in their own colours, jockies' faces being traced in the horses' heads. It is impossible here to notice more than a few of the foreground figures, such as the Prince of Wales, the Dukes of Westminster, Portland, and Beaufort, with suggestions of Barrett, Archer, Watts, and Cannon; above this are "welshing" and "nobbling" incidents, and a "strong man" scene on the course, in which an athletic jockey is balancing a horse; but exceedingly crisp and delightful, and a charming picture in itself, is a field of some dozen horses bestridden by lady riders in most effective racing costumes, who are making life a burden to an unfortunate starter vainly endeavouring to get them into line. A thimble-rigging incident leads us finally to the apotheosis of racing, shown by a crowd of jockies prostrate in adoration of a golden horse.'—*Sporting Notes.*

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THE SPORTSMAN'S DREAM. By R. M. Alexander.

Makes an admirable companion to either of the above, and shows us a tired Sportsman sleeping in his easy-chair before a comfortable fire, and dreaming of the various Sports, which are cleverly depicted in the wreaths arising from his half-smoked pipe.

Coloured Print, 17 by 12½ inches, £1 1s.

A MEMORABLE DAY. By A. C. Havell.

Will make a pendant to the preceding three, being a series of Fourteen Hunting Sketches ingeniously arranged amongst the branches of trees, and giving the varied incidents of a real good day. Coloured Print, 17 by 12½ inches, £1 1s.

RECOLLECTIONS OF ALT CAR. By S. T. Dadd.

Presents us with a series of Coursing Incidents, from 'Going to the Meet' to 'The Kill,' and includes the Slipper crouching behind the screen in a state of 'Expectation,' the 'Critical Moment' as he is about to slip the straining greyhounds, and the Course at the moment when 'A Wrench' takes place. Coloured Print, 17 by 12 inches, £1 1s.

'THERE'S MANY A SPILL' 'TWIXT 'THE FIND' AND 'THE KILL.' By A. C. Havell.

In this we see a series of accidents in the Hunting Field at a decidedly 'hairy' place. Three of the sterner sex have unmistakably come to grief; but, to redeem the position from utter discomfiture, we have a young and good-looking lady, admirably mounted, and, having safely negotiated the difficulty, sailing away in triumph.

Coloured Print, 26 by 13 inches, £1 1s.

'WHO-HOOP! THEY HAVE HIM—THEY'RE ROUNDED HIM!' By A. C. Havell.

A capital delineation of a kill in a turnpike road. On the right is a huntsman jumping a gate, while on the left are two ladies in a Ralli Car pulling up to avoid driving over the hounds.

Coloured Print, 26 by 13 inches, £1 1s.

REFUSING WATER (on the way to COVERT). By Wilfrid Thomas.

A well-appointed Tandem Dogcart, with the leader refusing to cross a flooded road.

Coloured Print, 20 by 15 inches, 15s.

TRYING THE NEW TEAM. By A. C. Havell.

A lady, accompanied by a gentleman, driving a team of well-bred bays in a tandem dogcart.

Coloured Print, companion to above, 15s.

THE FIRST DAY OF THE SEASON. By F. Cecil Boulton.

Introduces us to a charming young lady on a well-bred chestnut, preceded by a gentleman, who is a type of the old English Sporting Squire, well mounted on a clipped bay, who is opening a gate into a lane, in which are seen entering a field on the opposite side, on their way to cover, the Huntsman, Whips, and Hounds.

Size, 30 by 14 inches. Coloured Print, £1 11s. 6d.

'HALF-A-MINUTE! AND THEN, TALLY-HO!' By A. C. Havell.

Companion to the above. Here we see 'Charley' stealing out of cover. So also does the Whip, who is holding up his hand to warn the advancing field against heading him.

Size and price the same as above.

'HOLD HARD, GENTLEMEN!' By F. Cecil Boulton.

Shows Hounds streaming out of covert, with the Huntsman emerging therefrom, followed by an impatient field, to whom he turns, with uplifted hand, imploring them not to overrun the hounds. Two ladies in a mail phaeton have pulled up to see the sport.

Size and price the same as above.

A BREAST-HIGH SCENT. By F. Cecil Boulton.

A Lady and Gentleman in a tandem dogcart pulling up, whilst a pack of Hounds in full cry crosses the road, followed by the Huntsman and field.

Size and price the same as above.

THE END OF A LONG RUN. By Basil J. Nightingale.

Presents us with the ultimate of the Noble Sport, 'The Death of the Fox,' who has just been rescued from the Pack with Brush, Pads, and Mask intact, the former doubtless intended for the Lady on the blown, thorough-bred-looking Hunter, who forms the centre of the picture. The Huntsman's bay and Hounds possess quality and character.

Size and price the same as above.

POLO CRACKS. From the Original by Cuthbert Bradley.

A cleverly arranged series of sketches on one sheet, exemplifying the different incidents connected with this increasingly popular sport. We seem to recognise, amongst others, the styles and characteristics of the Earls of Airlie and Harrington, the Rajah of Kuch Behar; Captains Jones, Little, Spicer, and Herbert; Messrs. Peat, Mildmay, Baird, Stowe, Vaughan, and Hardy. The heads of the half-dozen ponies, projected from their boxes, admirably typify the different breeds—viz., the Blood, the Arabian, the Irish, the New Forest, the Welsh, and the Indian Tat.

Coloured Print, 28 by 19 inches, £2 2s.

MARKET HARBOROUGH. By F. Cecil Boulton.

A Series of Twelve Subjects, four on a sheet, depicting some of the most renowned incidents in Major Whyte-Melville's inimitable book with this title, and pictorialises the adventures of the Honourable Crasher, Mr. Sawyer, Mr. Sloper, Mr. Tiptop, Old Isaac, Mr. Stripes, and others.

Coloured Prints, size of each Subject, 12 by 7½, price £3 3s. the complete Set,
or £1 1s. the sheet of Four Subjects.

FOX HUNTING. By A. C. Havell.

A Set of Four upright subjects on one sheet, illustrating the following scenes:—
'A Favourite Meet,' 'Throwing them in,' 'In the Foremost Flight,' and 'Break him up, Beauties!'

Coloured Prints, size of each subject, 11½ x 8 inches, £1 11s. 6d. the sheet of four subjects.

WARE HARE! By F. C. Boulton.

Shows us two couples of Young Hounds 'running riot' after a hare, with 'the Whip' in full chase. One hound has thought better of it, and pulled up in time; one is howling from the effect of a well-applied lash—and the thonging of the other is imminent.

Coloured Print, 24 by 17 inches, £1 1s.

Fores's Sporting Publications.

GONE AWAY!—RUN TO EARTH! By F. Cecil Boulton.

'In "Gone Away," we are glad to find that the artist has broken the traditional method of representing the pack in a wedge-like form. There are only two and a half couple of hounds in the foreground, and they are not in conventional attitudes. The huntsman's horse is coming nearly straight on end at the spectator—a position that renders the representation of animals additionally difficult. In "Run to Earth" the master is up at the drain before the huntsman, notwithstanding an evident fall.'—*The Field*.

Coloured Upright Prints, 24 by 14 inches. £2 2s. the pair.

'OUT FOR A SCAMPER,' by F. Cecil Boulton, represents a Pack of Hounds rushing out of the kennel-door, which has just been thrown open by 'The Whip,' who, in Macintosh and with Crop in hand, is about taking them out to Exercise.

Coloured Print, 20 by 14 inches. Price 15s.

'IN FOR A GOOD THING,' by A. C. Havell (companion to the above), shows a Pack of Hounds in Full Cry, foreshortened and coming towards the spectator; Huntsman and Field bringing up the rear.

Coloured Print, 20 by 14 inches. Price 15s.

SUSPENSE (a likely Corner), by Cecil Boulton. A model 'Whip,' neat, muscular, and well dressed, mounted on a good stamp of 'Whip's horse,' at the corner of a covert where 'Charley' is likely to break.

Coloured Print, 20 by 15 inches, 15s.

ANY PORT IN A STORM, by E. Caldwell (companion to the above), shows a 'Scurry' in a Strawyard consequent upon the intrusion of a beaten Fox in the midst of Pigs and Poultry, in his endeavour to escape from Hounds, by whom he is hard pressed.

Coloured Print, 20 by 14½ inches, 15s.

THE YOUNG MASTER, by A. C. Havell. Presumably the son of the M. F. H.; a youngster, hardly as yet in his teens, in the act of topping a post and rail fence.

Coloured Print, 22½ by 15½ inches, £1 1s.

MORNING—EVENING, by A. C. Havell. A Pair of upright subjects. The first introduces us to a well-dressed sportsman on a fresh bay, proceeding leisurely to covert. In the other, the deepening shades of evening find our hero, in pouring rain, with evident difficulty consulting a sign-post as to his whereabouts; the appearance of man and horse suggests a hard day's sport.

Coloured Prints, 16 by 9 inches, £1 1s. the pair.

TOWN—COUNTRY, by Cecil Boulton. A Pair of Upright Subjects. Town shows us a well-appointed Four-in-hand being admirably 'tooled' round The Drive; the entrance to Hyde Park and Apsley House in the background. Country—a capitally foreshortened tandem dogcart 'bowling along' a country road. In each subject the post of honour beside the driver is worthily occupied by one of the fair sex.

Coloured Print, 18 by 12 inches, £1 4s. the pair.

FORES'S CELEBRATED SPORTING PUBLICATIONS,

After J. F. HERRING, Sen., O. COOPER HENDERSON, H. ALKEN, Sen., and Others.

FORES'S NATIONAL SPORTS. After J. F. Herring, Sen.

THE START FOR THE DERBY.—Plate 1. Price £3 3s.

STEEPLE-CHASE CRACKS.—Plate 2. Price £3 3s.

FOX-HUNTING.—3. THE MEET. 4. THE FIND. 5. THE RUN.

6. THE KILL. Price £10 10s. the Four, or £3 3s. each.

RACING.—7. SADDLING. 8. A FALSE START. 9. THE RUN IN.

10. RETURNING TO WEIGH. Price £10 10s. the four, or £3 3s. each.

The Set of Ten Plates (size, $41\frac{1}{2} \times 20\frac{3}{4}$ inches), price £26 5s.

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LEFT AT HOME. After R. B. Davis. Represents a finestamp of Hunter, and Hounds of perfect form, excited by the sound of the huntsman's horn. Size, $29\frac{1}{2} \times 22\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Price £1 11s. 6d.

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Sheets 2, 3, 4, form a consecutive series of Twelve Hunting Incidents.

FORES'S HUNTING SCENES.

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PLATE 1.—THE FIRST INTRODUCTION TO HOUNDS.

Represents a string of unbroken colts plunging with excitement as for the first time they fall in with hounds.

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A team of old hunters, who have been waiting unattended for 'The Mail Change,' are shown bolting after hounds.

Size, $19\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Price 15s. each.

AN EXTRAORDINARY STEEPLECHASE.

FOR 1000 SOVEREIGNS.

Between Mr. Geo. Osbaldeston on his 'Clasher,' and Dick Christian on Capt. Ross's 'Clinker.' From Great Dalby Windmill to within a mile of Tilton-on-the-Hill. The five miles were done in 16 minutes.

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(A SCENE ON THE ROAD.)

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Designed to hang or stand.

A receptacle for the Meets of Three Packs of Hounds; also Documents, &c. Price 15s.

ON THE ROAD to GRETNA, by C. Cooper Henderson.

Shows that historical vehicle, an old 'Po-Chay' and four, going at speed, with a gentleman leaning out of the window offering a purse to the Post Boys—pursuers in the distance. The stamp of Horses and character of Post Boys are admirably given by the above unrivalled painter of Coaching and Road Scenes.

Coloured, $17\frac{1}{2}$ by 11 inches, £2 2s.

THE HUNTING SEASON IN IRELAND, a pair by

CECIL BOULT. Are humorous satires on the 'boycotting' of hunting; in one of the plates a Fox attired as an Irish peasant is defiantly trailing his coat before a Foxhound dressed as a Huntsman; in the other we have Mr. Fox, Wife, and Family, still humorously attired, enjoying a picnic, without fear of interruption from their old enemies the Hounds.

Coloured, $15\frac{1}{2}$ by 11 inches, £4 4s. the pair.

'LOST AND FOUND,' by Stanley Berkley.

A large Dog which has been stolen, having broken the rope which held him (a part being still round his neck), regains the door of his old home, and waits eagerly and anxiously on the doorstep in pelting rain for admittance. Coloured, $10\frac{1}{2}$ by $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches, £1 5s. Plain, 10s. 6d.

ANGELS EVER BRIGHT AND FAIR, by E. George.

Represents in the Firmament two lovely Female Heads (dark and fair), with flowing gauze drapery: one gazes eagerly and intently upwards, the other 'casts a longing, lingering look' below. Coloured, $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches circle, £2 2s.

SHOOTING, by Basil Bradley, in four subjects, viz.

Partridge, Grouse, Wild Duck, and Woodcock, will prove acceptable to all 'gunners.' Dogs, game, and sportsmen are thoroughly well delineated by one who is evidently master of the 'business.'

Coloured Engravings, $23\frac{1}{2}$ by $14\frac{1}{2}$ inches, £1 1s. each, or £3 3s. the Set of Four.

FOXES' HEADS, by C. Burton Barber (a pair), entitled

'HARD PRESSED!' An old 'Dog' on the point of being 'run into,' with glaring eyes and open jaws—determined to 'die game.' And,

ESCAPED! A panting 'Vixen' who has doubled upon

her pursuers, and is anxiously listening to their retreating sounds.

Coloured Prints, $11\frac{1}{2}$ by $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches, 15s. the pair.

FORES'S NEW ETCHINGS.

A FLYING VISIT. After E. Caldwell. A hunted fox causing a 'scurry' in a farmyard.

GAME TO THE LAST. After E. Caldwell. Hounds running into a fox, who is dying fighting.

A PROMISING LITTER. After C. B. Barber. A vixen and Cubs at play.

LA DIABLE EST MORT. After Percy Macquoid. Fowls about to approach a fox who is shamming dead.

INNOCENTS ABROAD. After J. C. Dollman. Goslings meeting a bull-dog on a narrow bridge.

OUT FOR A SCAMPER. After F. Cecil Boulton. Pack of Hounds rushing out of kennel-door.

IN FOR A GOOD THING. After A. C. Havell. Pack of Hounds in full cry. Companion to the above.

Size, about 9 by 7 inches. Artist's Proofs, 21s. each; Prints, 10s. 6d. each.

DOOMED. After F. Cecil Boulton. Hounds close upon a thoroughly beaten fox. Artist's Proofs, £3 3s. Prints, £1 1s.

HIS FIRST AUDIENCE. After A. Harvey Moore. Three donkeys attracted by the musical efforts of a fisher-lad. Remarque Proof, £3 3s. Prints, £1 1s.

DOLCE CON ESPRESSIONE. After J. Watson Nicol. Two Court Jesters singing and playing. Remarque Proof, £3 3s.; Prints, £1 1s.

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THE FAREWELL CARESS. Painted by C. Burton Barber. Engraved by F. STACPOOLE. Artist's Proofs, £8 8s. Prints, £2 2s.

NO FEAR OF THE HOUNDS. Painted by C. Burton Barber. Engraved by W. H. SIMMONS. Artist's Proofs, £8 8s. Prints, £2 2s.

A PROMISING LITTER. Painted by C. Burton Barber. Engraved by W. T. DAVEY. Artist's Proofs, £8 8s. Prints, £2 2s.

MOTHER AND CHILD. Painted by Sir E. Landseer, R.A. Etched by H. PAPPRELL. Artist's Proofs, £2 2s. each; Prints, £1 1s. each.

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CHRISTIAN GRACES—FAITH, HOPE, CHARITY. Painted by G. E. HICKS. Engraved by F. HOLL. Artist's Proofs, £6 6s. Prints, £2 2s.

IL PENNEROSO. Painted by G. E. Hicks. Engraved by F. HOLL. Artist's Proofs, £3 3s. Prints, £1 1s.

L'ALLEGRO. Painted by G. E. Hicks. Engraved by F. HOLL. Artist's Proofs, £3 3s. Prints, £1 1s.

LINKS OF LOVE. Painted by G. E. Hicks. Engraved by F. HOLL. Artist's Proofs, £3 3s. Prints, £1 1s.

THE PAST AND THE FUTURE. From the Original by Miss GILLIES. Engraved by F. HOLL. Artist's Proofs, £3 3s. Prints, £1 1s.

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MIRANDA AND DOROTHEA. Painted by John Faed. R.S.A. Engraved by W. HOLL. Artist's Proofs, £3 3s. India Proofs, £2 2s. Prints, £1 1s.

THE HEAVENS ARE TELLING THE GLORY OF GOD. From the Original by Miss GILLIES. Engraved by F. HOLL. Artist's Proofs, £3 3s. Prints, £1 1s.

THE CRITICAL MOMENT. Photographed from a Drawing by Sir EDWIN LANDSEER, R.A. Coloured, £2 2s. Plain, £1 1s.

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE, K.G., G.C.B., &c. Painted by JOHN LUCAS. Engraved by T. OLDHAM BARLOW, R.A. Artist's Proofs, £6 6s. Prints, £2 2s.

Maj.-Gen. The EARL OF CARDIGAN, K.C.B., &c. (Leading the Brigade of Light Cavalry at Balaklava.) Painted by A. F. DE PRADES. Engraved by H. COUSINS. Artist's Proofs, £6 6s. Prints, £2 2s.

The Most Noble MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE. Painted by Sir FRANCIS GRANT, P.R.A. Engraved by J. R. JACKSON. Artist's Proofs, £3 3s. Prints, £1 1s.

Maj.-Gen. Sir J. YORKE SCARLETT, K.C.B., &c. (Commanding the Brigade of Heavy Cavalry at Balaklava.) Painted by Sir FRANCIS GRANT, P.R.A. Engraved by F. BROMLEY. Artist's Proofs, £6 6s. Prints, £2 2s.

FREEMAN THOMAS, Esq. (Master of the South Down Hounds.) Painted by STEPHEN PEARCE. Engraved by J. SCOTT. Artist's Proofs, £3 3s. Prints, £1 1s. 6d.

the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are aged 65 and over has increased by 1.5 million, and the number of people aged 75 and over has increased by 1.2 million (Office for National Statistics 1999). The number of people aged 85 and over has increased by 0.5 million.

There is a growing awareness of the need to address the needs of the ageing population. The Department of Health (1999) has published a strategy for ageing, which sets out the government's commitment to improve the lives of older people. The strategy is based on three main principles: (1) to ensure that older people have the opportunity to live independently and actively; (2) to ensure that older people have access to the services and support they need; and (3) to ensure that older people are treated with respect and dignity. The strategy is a key document for the development of policies and services for older people.

The Department of Health (1999) also identifies a number of key areas for action, including: (1) improving the health and well-being of older people; (2) improving the social and economic conditions of older people; (3) improving the housing and transport of older people; (4) improving the access to services and support for older people; and (5) improving the treatment and care of older people. These areas are all inter-related and need to be addressed in a holistic way.

The Department of Health (1999) also identifies a number of key challenges for the future, including: (1) the increasing number of people aged 85 and over; (2) the increasing number of people with long-term health conditions; (3) the increasing number of people living alone; (4) the increasing number of people with mental health problems; and (5) the increasing number of people with physical disabilities. These challenges need to be addressed in a proactive way.

The Department of Health (1999) also identifies a number of key opportunities for the future, including: (1) the increasing number of people who are active and engaged in their communities; (2) the increasing number of people who are volunteering; (3) the increasing number of people who are working; and (4) the increasing number of people who are living independently. These opportunities need to be supported and encouraged.

The Department of Health (1999) also identifies a number of key priorities for the future, including: (1) improving the health and well-being of older people; (2) improving the social and economic conditions of older people; (3) improving the housing and transport of older people; (4) improving the access to services and support for older people; and (5) improving the treatment and care of older people. These priorities need to be addressed in a holistic way.

The Department of Health (1999) also identifies a number of key actions for the future, including: (1) improving the health and well-being of older people; (2) improving the social and economic conditions of older people; (3) improving the housing and transport of older people; (4) improving the access to services and support for older people; and (5) improving the treatment and care of older people. These actions need to be implemented in a timely and effective way.